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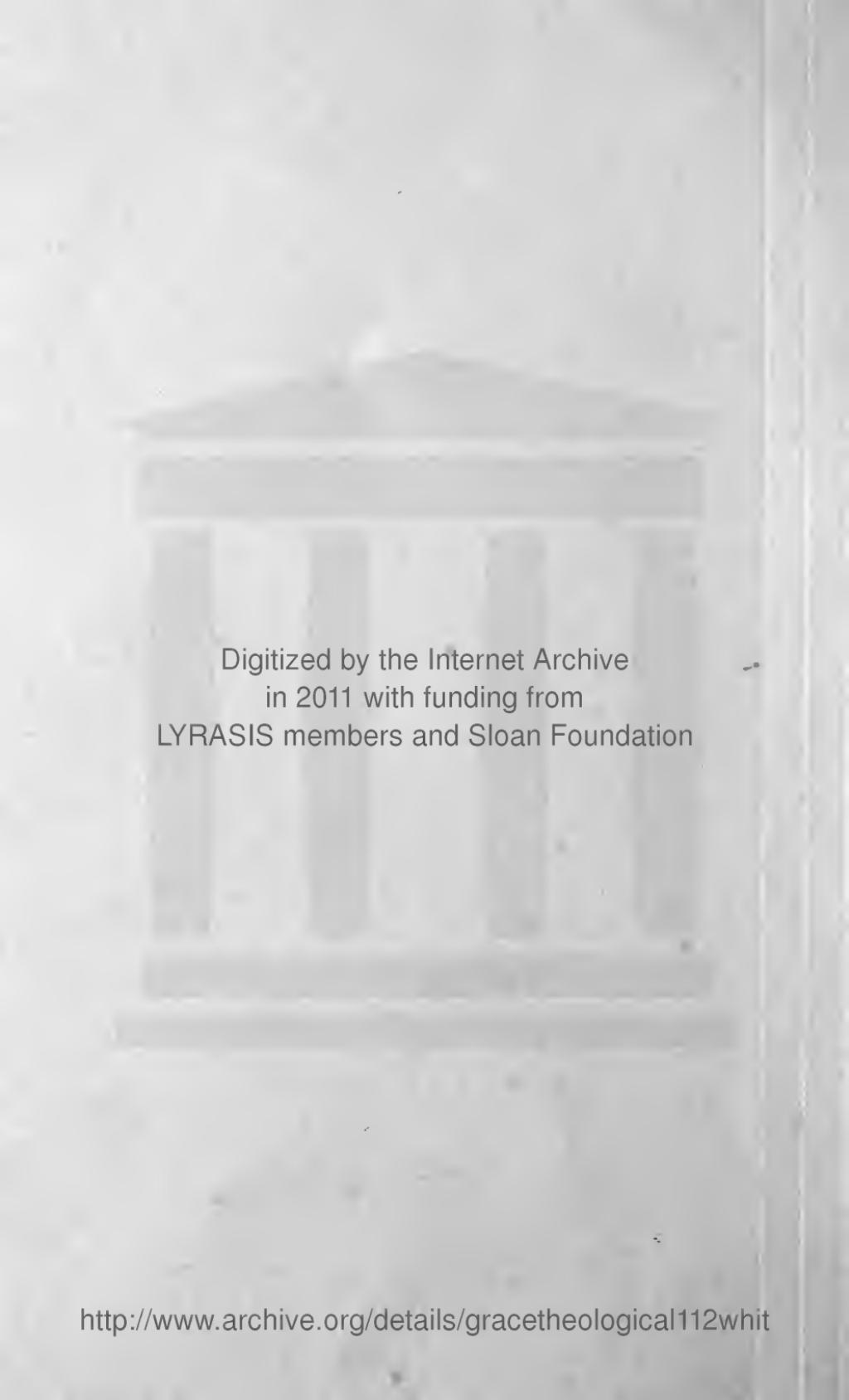
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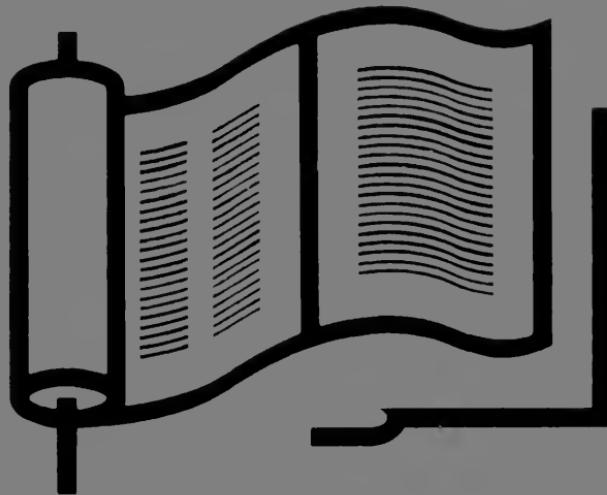
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GRACE THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL

The *Grace Theological Journal* begins, with this issue, its career as a medium for publicizing the theological convictions and insights of the faculty and friends of Grace Theological Seminary. For more than forty years the blessing of God has been clearly evident in the growing influence of this graduate school. The impact of its spiritual testimony and of its theological distinctives has been felt in many parts of the world where nearly two thousand alumni are proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is in acknowledgment of God's gracious providence that the seminary faculty is seeking to meet the growing need for a scholarly and thoroughly biblical theological journal.

It was exactly twenty years ago this spring that the more humble predecessor of the *Grace Theological Journal* began its thirteen-year career (a list of available issues is obtainable upon request). Several of the editors of the old *Grace Journal* serve on the present editorial staff as well. But the difference between the two journals is profound. A totally new format, which compares favorably with other major journals of our day, is perhaps the most obvious difference. There is also a more realistic financial structure, advanced typesetting and publishing equipment not previously available, a much larger constituency, and especially the availability of a faculty and staff twice as large as in 1960.

One level of quality, however, has not changed. The seminary faculty is still totally committed to the proposition that God has spoken infallibly to men through the medium of his written Word, the Bible, absolutely inerrant in the autographs. Not only is the Bible true down to the very "jot and tittle," it is also basically clear and understandable. No one will ever be able to say to the final Judge of mankind, "I would have trusted you and obeyed you, but I could not understand your Word!"

Among the deep theological convictions shared by the faculty and constituency of Grace Theological Seminary are these: (1) the world was directly created by God in six literal days apart from any evolutionary processes; (2) through willful rebellion against God, mankind has fallen into a state of total spiritual depravity and can only be saved from an eternal hell by the grace of God through personal faith in the substitutionary sacrifice and bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; (3) God's program for the Church Age

(which began at the day of Pentecost and will end at the pre-tribulation rapture) is outlined in the great commission of Christ and is accomplished through the instrumentality of the local church; and (4) God's covenant promises to Israel will be literally fulfilled during Christ's thousand-year reign on earth following his Second Coming. Thus, in spite of certain similarities (such as justification through faith based upon the merits of the blood of Christ), the structure and functions of Israel and the Church are quite distinct. (For a more complete statement of doctrinal distinctives, see the Covenant of Faith of Grace Theological Seminary and the various position statements of the seminary on controversial issues.)

The faculty believes that these positions are clearly taught in Scripture. However, it is recognized and emphasized that spiritual truths cannot be known by "the natural man" (1 Cor 2:14), and that the Scripture provides its own guidelines for interpreting its message. Therefore, one of the basic purposes of a theological journal must be the elucidation of the exact meaning of Holy Scripture in its original languages so that all obstacles may be removed that would in any way suppress or quench the Spirit of God in his unique work in men's hearts. Truth from God and about God is the only frame of reference within which human beings can live meaningfully; but such truth can come only from the Bible, not from existential or charismatic experiences.

Finally, the editors of this new venture in theological journalism are committed to the proposition that revealed truth cannot be perpetuated through compromise and compromise cannot be avoided without a clear recognition, identification, and warning against error. This important guideline was clearly stated in an editorial written by Alva J. McClain, founder and first president of Grace Theological Seminary, in the first issue of the *Grace Journal* (Spring, 1960):

The editors and sponsors of this publication will aim to follow the apostolic injunction to "preach (herald) the Word," presenting expositions of this Word in a positive and constructive manner. But they will not hesitate, as need may arise, to "reprove" and "rebuke" (2 Tim 4:2). To do this is never a pleasant task, but it is a solemn obligation laid upon all who minister the Word of God. The Apostle Paul, when occasion demanded, not only denounced without reservation heresy and apostasy, but also did not hesitate to name the names of the guilty. Among these, for example, were "Hymenaeus and Philetus" who taught that the "resurrection is past" (2 Tim 2:17-18). Certainly the Apostle in this case might have assumed the attitude, fashionable in some circles, that no amount of denial or heresy could in any wise disturb or overthrow the truth; and that, therefore, both the men and their heresy should be treated with lofty silence. However, although Paul assures us in this very epistle that "the foundation of God

standeth sure" (2 Tim 2:19), he was also concerned about the souls of men. To know that no amount of heresy about the resurrection could overthrow the resurrection, was one thing. But the baneful effects of the heresy upon its hearers was something else: in this case to "overthrow the faith of some" (2:18). And this leads the Apostle to rebuke the propagandist by name, not for the sake of polemics, but for the sake of human souls.

For the accomplishment of these goals, the editors will be soliciting the contributions of Christian scholars beyond the parameters of its own constituency. This is basically a theological journal; therefore, articles and book reviews that touch on technical issues in exegesis, linguistics, history, archaeology, science, and philosophy must contribute directly to our deeper understanding of God through the greater illumination of his Word. It is our fervent prayer that the Son of God, our Savior and Lord, may be glorified directly or indirectly on every page of this publication, and that it will be used by him for the illumination and encouragement of his people until Christ comes for his Church.

A TIME TO TEACH

HOMER A. KENT, JR.

Now is the time to teach. America is shouting this at us in scores of ways. During 1979 Congress increased federal aid to students with the passing of the Middle Income Student Assistance Act which increases government funds for education nearly twofold.¹ In addition, the states and territories spent another \$828 million on student aid in 1978-79.²

Legislation recently passed Congress, and was signed into law by President Carter, to establish a cabinet-level Department of Education, instead of the past arrangement with an Office of Education within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The purpose is to give education a higher visibility and priority in the federal organizational structure, rather than having its interests confused amid the welter of other programs administered by HEW. Many independent institutions are not enthusiastic about this prospect, having learned from experience that increased government attention is not usually a blessing. The fact remains, however, that America is saying, "It is time to teach."

Not only at the federal level is this emphasis seen; the states are also deeply involved. Scholarship programs exist in almost every state to assist young people to obtain higher education. At the same time there is a growing concern that *real teaching* must be accomplished. The movement is growing that competency testing be incorporated, at least at the secondary level, before graduation be granted.

Meanwhile, parents are developing a growing suspicion that in spite of modern and expensive buildings, the latest in equipment, and every conceivable gadget, genuine teaching is not always accomplished. "Back to the basics" is the cry in many circles. One is confronted with the disturbing fact that the 3 R's are rapidly being replaced by the 6 R's: Remedial Reading, Remedial 'Riting, and Remedial 'Rithmetic. Teaching must involve learning; if students are not learning, then we are not really teaching. Parents are telling us, "It is time to teach."

¹A. C. Roark, "States Face Pressure from Mid Income Students," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 17 (Nov 27, 1978) 4-5.

²Ibid.

The Christian church must also recognize that it is the time to teach. In this context teaching is defined as that function which instructs people in the Word of God as clearly, accurately, and thoroughly as possible so that learning is achieved. It is assumed that the Word of God is the basic context of instruction and that our responsibility is to teach the whole counsel of God, not just certain favorite sections. It is also assumed that the Bible is the Word of God and without error, and thus its teachings are fully authoritative for man and especially for believers. For at least three reasons, it is absolutely essential that Christians everywhere recognize that now is the time to teach.

TEACHING WAS CENTRAL IN THE COMMISSION OF JESUS

Christ himself was a teacher

1. This was the name by which he was most frequently called. It is common today to find our Lord referred to as the carpenter of Nazareth or to be thought of as an almost mystical figure, but most of the time people called him "Teacher." Only once in the Bible was Jesus called a carpenter (Mark 6:3), although he was elsewhere called a carpenter's son (Matt 13:55).

By far the most common way in which Jesus was addressed was as "Teacher" or "Master." Both of these are translations of the common word for "teacher" ($\deltaιδάσκαλος$). When John the Baptist pointed out Jesus to two of his followers, they spoke to him with these words, "Teacher, where dwellest thou?" (John 1:38). When the Pharisees were critical of Jesus' disregard of the traditions of the elders, they said to his disciples, "Why eateth your Teacher with publicans and sinners?" (Matt 9:11). When Nicodemus, that eminent Pharisee of Jerusalem, came to Jesus by night, he said, "we know you are a teacher come from God" (John 3:2). When some terrified disciples wakened Jesus during a storm at sea, their first words were, "Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?" (Mark 4:38). A rich young ruler one day asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 18:18). An agitated father with a demon-possessed child said to Jesus, "Teacher, I beseech thee, look upon my son" (Luke 9:38). The grieving Martha summoned her sister Mary with the words, "The Teacher is come and calleth for thee" (John 11:28). Jesus himself said to the disciples, "Ye call me Teacher and Lord, and ye say well for so I am" (John 13:13). If we may judge by the names people gave him, they did not think of Jesus primarily as a former carpenter, or an evangelist, or an orator, or even as a prophet, although he was all of those things. They saw him as a teacher — one whose primary activity involved instructing his hearers in a message of truth from God.

2. Furthermore, Jesus was continually engaged in teaching. This was undoubtedly why he was given the title. The general pattern of his ministry found him "teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt 4:23). His teaching was impressive, not only because of its content but because of its authoritative tone — so different from the scribal practice of merely citing the pronouncements of distinguished rabbis from the past. On the contrary, Jesus "taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt 7:29).

He did his teaching often when circumstances were adverse. The temple authorities had been hostile to Jesus since the beginning of his ministry when he had driven out the merchants and the money-changers. Yet at the close of his public career, after he had cleansed the temple a second time, he said to those who arrested him in the garden, "I sat daily with you teaching in the temple and ye laid no hold on me" (Matt 26:55).

He taught people wherever he could find them. He did not require a classroom or a pulpit. He taught crowds by the seaside in Galilee (Mark 4:1). The parable of the sower was given in such a setting. He taught great crowds publicly, and sometimes he taught his disciples privately (Mark 9:31). Whether on a mountainside (Matt 5:2), or sitting in a boat (Luke 5:3), or lecturing in a synagogue (Luke 6:6), or merely walking along the road (Luke 13:22), teaching was the outstanding characteristic of Jesus during the days of his ministry.

Jesus told us why he concentrated his ministry on teaching. He had come as the embodiment of the Word of God, to bring the message of God to men. The absolutely crucial nature of that message explains why Jesus concentrated his ministry upon it. He said, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). He emphasized the unique source of his message: "As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (John 8:38). He knew that the message he brought could transform lives even after he was gone. That was why he concentrated on teaching. He did not build any structures during those brief three years. He established no complex organization. He cared not a bit for the trappings which we commonly associate with power and success. Instead He was continually *teaching*.

Thirty years after the Ascension, Christians still remembered Jesus for his deeds and especially for his teaching. When Luke wrote the Book of Acts, he observed to Theophilus that our Lord's brief ministry could be characterized as that which "Jesus began both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1).

Christ commanded his followers to teach

Even while his own ministry was going on, Jesus trained his disciples and sent them out to teach others. They went out in pairs, and later reported to him the results of their teaching (Mark 6:7, 30). The content of truth which was being conveyed was so important that it did not matter whether everyone heard it directly from the lips of Jesus. Those whom he had taught and commissioned could also be effective conveyors of his message.

As our Lord prepared the apostles for his departure, he made it clear that they were expected to teach what they had been taught. The Holy Spirit would refresh their memories regarding what they had heard Jesus teach (John 14:26). They must give testimony to what they had learned from Jesus (John 15:27).

This responsibility to teach was brought into clear focus following the resurrection, when Jesus gave the great commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, *teaching* them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt 28:19-20). The Christian faith was not merely an enlistment program, but a meaningful commitment. It was to be characterized by the clear teaching of God's truth which truly transforms lives and is sufficient for every need because it is the Word of God.

The importance of teaching in the program of Jesus is seen not only in his own practice and in the Commission he gave his disciples, but also in his action subsequent to the Ascension. As the Lord of the Church, he not only bestowed the Holy Spirit upon believers in conjunction with the promise of the Father, but he also gave the key spiritual gifts of leadership which would insure the success of the church. In Eph 4:11-12, it is recorded: "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ." These words are inscribed on a bronze plaque by the stairway in the library at Grace Seminary, where they confront the student every time he climbs the stairs to study. In this Scripture passage, the function of teaching is woven inseparably with that of pastoring, suggesting that it is a basic and essential function of the ministry at the local church level. Christ designed it that way, and he insured its performance by the sort of leadership gifts he provided. It will be shown later that these leaders were not the only ones who were to do any teaching. Nevertheless, they were to be the specialists who were particularly gifted and who could train the rest.

There is also another reason why we must recognize that it is "a time to teach" if we would be biblical Christians, looking to the Scripture for our rule of faith and practice.

TEACHING WAS BASIC IN THE PRACTICE OF THE APOSTLES

Christians look to the apostles, not only as the eyewitnesses and personal companions of our Lord in his ministry, but also because they were especially chosen by him and commissioned to be his witnesses in a unique sense. Jesus said to them: "Ye also shall bear witness because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15:27). They were Christ's authorized witnesses. The New Testament is the written testimony of the apostles. The apostle Paul wrote of Christian believers as being "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph 2:20). Although many interpret this as meaning "the foundation which the apostles laid — namely, Christ," it is possible that he meant that in some sense the apostles and prophets provided the foundation through their teaching and writing, with Christ being the cornerstone, the key feature in the structure. This would harmonize with Rev 21:14, where the apostles' names are inscribed on twelve foundation stones of the wall of the new Jerusalem. Hence it is crucial if our faith and practice is to be biblical that we know how the apostles understood Jesus, and what they are saying to us.

They did teaching themselves

The Book of Acts emphasizes this again and again, and the teaching involved not only evangelism. The momentous events of Pentecost were followed immediately by a regular program of teaching the converts. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayers" (Acts 2:42).

In Acts 4, the very first persecution against the early church broke out because Peter and John were teaching people in the precincts of the temple (Acts 4:1-2). Even though they were commanded to desist from all further teaching (Acts 4:18), this did not deter them from carrying out what they believed the great commission required of them. Later we find them once again in the temple by a direct order of an angel, and "they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught" (Acts 5:21). They were still there teaching some hours later when soldiers came to arrest them (Acts 5:25), and the high priest eventually accused them of filling Jerusalem with their teaching (Acts 5:28). Harassment, imprisonments, even beatings did not stop them. "Every day in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ" (Acts 5:42).

This strong emphasis on teaching the Word of God was not only characteristic of the Jerusalem church but of other churches as well. In the church at Antioch, Barnabas and Saul taught the converts for a year (Acts 11:26), and later prophets and teachers were prominent in the ministry there (Acts 13:1). This careful instruction in the Word of God undoubtedly was basic in the development of the spiritual strength of these churches. It was not a mere afterthought, nor a luxury to be provided for a few interested converts who showed unusual promise. Teaching the Word of God was the normal procedure for all converts all the time. An example is the church at Thessalonica. The two Thessalonian epistles were written to that congregation just a few months after the church was founded with new converts. The amount of spiritual understanding which Paul assumes they had as he wrote is obviously considerable as we learn from reflecting upon those letters. Yet Paul had been with them a very short time, perhaps as little as three weeks (Acts 17:7). He must have wasted no time in teaching them immediately upon their conversion.

It was Paul's testimony to the leaders of the church at Ephesus that his teaching pattern was to declare "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). He rode no hobbies, followed no fads, ignored no contexts. He taught God's truth in its total biblical perspective.

Furthermore, Paul seems to have regarded his teaching ministry as the most strenuous of tasks. He wrote to the Colossians that "admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom" was his responsibility and goal so that he might bring every man to maturity (Col 1:28). To do this he continually labored to the point of weariness, striving with all the vigor that an athlete must exert if he is to be a serious contender (Col 1:29). He did it because he regarded teaching as crucial in carrying out Christ's commission.

They stressed teaching for the leaders they trained

In the list of qualifications which Paul prepared for the selection of overseers for the church, one of the stipulations was that he be "apt to teach" or "able to teach." The reason is obvious. The basic function of an overseer is to direct the affairs of the church in the light of God's revealed truth, and that involves instructing others in the content of that revelation. Whether he be teaching sinners the way of salvation, nurturing Christians in their spiritual growth, or admonishing straying believers, he is essentially a *teacher* of God's truth.

The importance of teaching was also stressed in the various exhortations that were given to leaders already in office. In Rom 12:7, Paul exhorted those with the gift of teaching to concentrate on their teaching. He urged Timothy amid his heavy duties at Ephesus

to give particular attention to reading, to exhortation, and to teaching (1 Tim 4:13). He reminded the church that even though all elders were expected to be able teachers, those who excelled by their diligence at the task of preaching and teaching should be given double honor (1 Tim 5:17).

Furthermore, as Paul faced the end of his own ministry and contemplated the unfinished task stretching out before the church, his counsel for the future was that present leaders should give special concern to training new ones. He also indicated that the very heart of their ministry would be their ability to teach others. "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2).

They expected every Christian to be involved in teaching

The Epistle to the Hebrews explains that all Christians, after the passing of a reasonable length of time during which spiritual growth should be taking place, should be capable of teaching others. The fact that some were deficient merely called attention to the principle that was being violated by their immaturity. "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God" (Heb 5:12).

This does not mean that every Christian is a specially gifted teacher or that all should aspire to be official teachers. James counseled the church, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment" (James 3:1). Paul explained to the Corinthians, "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers." He then went on to say, "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?" (1 Cor 12:28-29). The point is clear: not every one has been gifted by God to be a teacher in the formal and official sense. Nevertheless every Christian is responsible to be a learner with sufficient achievement so that he can share God's truth with others. When we bear testimony to God's saving grace to unsaved friends and neighbors, and explain what God has done for us, this is a form of *teaching* and is expected from all of us.

It is clear, therefore, that the apostles understood from Jesus' own practice and from his order to his followers that Christians were responsible to teach. Inasmuch as the apostles were Christ's hand-picked messengers and the New Testament is their authorized and inspired interpretation of Christ and his message, their instruction to us is an additional reason for us to know that it is "time to teach."

There is yet a third reason why it is time to teach.

TEACHING IS DESPERATELY NEEDED TODAY

The frightening rise of cults

In recent years the dramatic rise in religious cults, many of them proclaiming themselves as Christian and preying upon members of Christian churches, points to the need for more thorough teaching of the Word of God.

When a Jim Jones, operating his Peoples' Temple in California under the respectable umbrella of a recognized Protestant denomination, can mesmerize a congregation, build it up to 20,000 members, brag about his sexual prowess with women followers, and then lead 900 people to a plantation in Guyana and eventually to a revolting mass suicide from which the shock waves have not yet settled,³ Christians must surely recognize that it is time to teach. One is reminded of the apostolic warning of those "holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power . . . among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim 3:5-7).

When Maharishi Mahesh Yogi can introduce his practice of Transcendental Meditation into America with such success that in two decades it can achieve respectability in the highest government and academic circles, it is time for Christians to teach. Maharishi International University, taking over the 100 year-old campus of former Parsons College in Iowa, now has 800 students. It was granted candidate status in 1975 and will apply for full accreditation in 1980. Although its students go to bed early, use no alcohol or drugs at their weekend parties, and attend classes frequently in suits and dresses rather than jeans, some other practices and claims are more disturbing. Everyone on campus meditates 20 minutes each morning and evening. Advanced meditators gather by the hundreds in a fieldhouse, where they are said to levitate and demonstrate other super-normal abilities. Reporters are not allowed to observe it lest the process take on a "circus atmosphere," so say university officials.⁴

When Mormonism publishes a 12-page color insert in *Reader's Digest*,⁵ advertising its viewpoints in a highly appealing fashion, it is time for orthodox Christianity to teach what true Christian faith really is. In that enticing booklet, the emphasis upon home and family, self-reliance, industry, personal responsibility, temperance,

³"Nightmare in Jonestown," *Time* 112 (Dec 4, 1978) 16-30.

⁴L. Middleton, "Meditation a Way of Life at Maharishi University," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 18 (May 14, 1979) 3-5.

⁵*Reader's Digest* 114 (Apr 1979).

service, and faith are all innocent-sounding affirmations of Christian ideals. The poorly taught are being snared by the thousands.

When the "Moonies" with their Unification Church promote themselves as a Christian organization, infiltrating neighborhoods with their propaganda, and staging rallies and demonstrations even on the steps of government, as this writer witnessed recently in Washington, it is a time to teach what God's Word has to say about salvation and prophecy and Christian living. When impressionable young people are subjected to brainwashing by the Moonies and no longer can be reached by their Christian parents, it is time to teach the Word of God.

The growing appeal of sensationalism

The natural human penchant for excitement has not been overlooked by various religious practitioners. Paul spoke of those in his day who were "peddling the word of God" (2 Cor 2:17). So today every part of the country has its religious opportunists vying with one another to build a following, utilizing every claim and gimmick to prey upon the unwary. Sad to say, a large part of their support and following comes from people who originally were from orthodox churches. Because their spiritual growth has been so shallow, they are attracted by sensational claims of supernatural healings or experiences, and like infants whose attention can be diverted by any glittering object, they flock after the big noise, the flashy claims, and the glamorized theatrics.

Now is the time to teach the stupendous truths of the Word of God. When people are impressed with the sensationalism of religious hucksters, we must have been less than impressive with the teachings of God's truth. The fault, however, does not lie with the message, but with the ineffective way it has been taught. Nothing less than a clear, accurate, and convincing instruction will do. God's revelation to man in Scripture with its message of transforming grace will create a sensation when it is clearly taught. Now is the time to teach!

Our people are not as biblically grounded as they should be

From time to time I have heard it said in evangelical circles that our people are well-taught in biblical truth, perhaps even overfed; what is needed now is to put that knowledge into operation. This is usually a well-meant statement, made in an effort to get believers active in Christian witnessing. Such statements, however, imply a false contrast. Knowledge and action are not opposing forces. Christians do not become slothful in their witness because they know too much spiritual truth. On the contrary, their problem is that they have

not been taught enough. They have not learned what our Lord is telling them about their glorious prospects, their present responsibilities, the provisions Christ has made for them by his Spirit, and the joyous experience that can be theirs as they walk in the light of his Word.

If the early church, so effective in its witness to a needy but hostile world, found it necessary to continue regularly in the apostles' teaching, dare we do any less?

Place the blame where you will, but most careful observers today are not noting any trend toward deeper biblical and spiritual knowledge among twentieth-century Christians on the whole. Understanding God's provisions for man in predestination, justification, and sanctification is minimal in many circles. The implications of the present debate over the inerrancy of Scripture are hazy in many minds, even though the tragic consequences of a wrong turn here are amply demonstrated in church history. The biblical teaching on sin, the character of God, the world, God's prophetic plan, and the Spirit-controlled life are only academic matters to some, far removed from the real world. The sort of moral standards we tolerate for ourselves does not always reflect the tenor of biblical teaching. If someone would attempt to discover what Christian standards are supposed to be from an examination of the books we read, the music we enjoy, the TV we watch, the recreation in which we indulge, the way we spend our money, and the way we use our time, would his conclusions match up with biblical teaching? Christians, it is time to teach the whole counsel of God.

The hunger for biblical instruction is still present

Although the superficial attractions of the world often tempt us to compete in kind, whatever short-term gains may occur are usually just that. We must not sell our spiritual birthright for a mess of pottage.

The evidence is clear, not only that the teaching of the Word of God is the only final answer to the needs of mankind but also that a genuine hunger for it still exists. The popularity of home Bible classes testifies to this hunger. One does not always need a formal setting and professional leadership. Godly men and women, mature in their faith and instructed by effective leaders in their churches, are having an extremely helpful influence by opening their homes and ministering to hungry hearts in this day of spiritual confusion.

The amazing growth of the Christian school movement in America is also clear evidence that a genuine desire for biblical instruction is not diminishing today. With God and prayer and the Bible largely excluded from public education, the Christian school is

rising to fill this need. Some estimates indicate that as many as 50% of the children in some areas will be enrolled in Christian schools in the not-too-distant future.

This hunger for biblical instruction is not limited just to Bible study alone. Those who take the Bible seriously understand that God's revelation provides a world-view that affects every area of human knowledge. Consequently a Christian philosophy of education should permeate every discipline of a truly Christian school. At Grace College and Seminary, for example, there is an attempt to make an effective integration of faith and learning in every part of the curriculum. Not only in the Seminary and in the Bible department of the college, but in psychology, literature, history, and every other discipline, the contribution of biblical truth is an integral part of the education. And the hunger is there. Christian colleges and seminaries that forthrightly declare their stand on Scripture and pursue it vigorously are generally healthier today than many of their counterparts who have allowed their Christian philosophy to weaken.

Yes, it is a time to teach. There has never been a better time. The issues are crucial, and the need was never greater. The climate today is more open than ever, and training is available for all who desire it.

But we must *do* it. Christ commanded us to teach. The apostles repeated the exhortation and it is absolutely vital that we teach the Word of God if our faith is to be kept strong and be extended to those in need. The Bible is the objective base which supports our faith and gives it proper direction. We must teach it, therefore, to ourselves, to our families, in our churches, and to hungry hearts everywhere. The admonition of Prov 7:1-3 should find ready acceptance by each of us: "My son, keep my words and store up my commands within you. Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart."

THE TEST OF ABRAHAM

GENESIS 22:1-19

JOHN I. LAWLOR

THE incredible story of the ordeal of Abraham and Isaac begins, presumably, with Abraham sojourning in the land of the Philistines (Gen 21:34) and concludes with Abraham, the main character in this drama, returning to Beer-sheba with the two young men and Isaac.¹

The pathos of this account is unequaled by any other portion of the Abraham sequence and perhaps the entire Pentateuchal tradition. The reader emotes with Abraham, for the entire story radiates great tensions, strong reactions, and human emotions. Skinner felt this, for he remarks that parts of it "... can hardly be read without tears."²

The manner in which the narrative has been put together evidences great literary artistry. Two factors unite to make the case. First, the use of repetitious statements seems intentional. The use of one such repetitious statement in v 1 ("Abraham! And he said 'Here I am.'") and v 11 ("Abraham, Abraham! And he said, 'Here I am.'") naturally divides the story into two general movements. The use of another "... your son, your only son ..." used three times (vv 2, 12, 16) tends to increase the gravity of the situation. Such redundancy creates great tension; it seems as if God almost strains to remind Abraham that the stakes are high. Such obvious repetition, it seems, is premeditated, perhaps for the purpose of raising the anxiety level of the reader. Still another, "So the two of them walked on together" (vv 6 and 8), puts the reader off; it also heightens the tension that builds toward the climax.

Second, there is a certain symmetry to the story which is, in part, achieved through the use of both triplets and tensions/resolutions. With respect to the former, the imperatives "take," "go," and "offer" (v 2) are a case in point. Vv 3, 6, and 10 are further examples.

¹The text is actually silent on the matter of Isaac's return to Beer-sheba with Abraham and the two young men; however, later episodes in the Abraham cycle have Abraham and Isaac together, a point which at least suggests his return with the rest.

²J. Skinner, *Genesis* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1910) 330.

Furthermore, the blessing formula of vv 17 and 18 appears as a triplet. With respect to the tensions/resolutions, several examples are apparent. The “only son” at the beginning is contrasted by the “greatly multiplied” seed at the conclusion. The initial command of God underscores the fact that the son whom Abraham was being called upon to offer was his only son. In one sense that was not true, for Ishmael was also his son. But he was the only son through whom the promises already given to Abraham could be realized. As the story closes, Abraham receives an emphatic enunciation of blessing (*וְהָרְבָה אֶרְכָה*) which would result in his “only son” being multiplied into descendants that would number “as the stars of the heavens and the sand which is on the seashore” (v 17). The text supplies the key element to the transition; v 16 says: “. . . because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son. . . .” The nature of the experience is initially described as a “test”; at the end it is turned into a “blessing.” The crisis point of the story (v 10) divides the two motifs. The first half (vv 1-9) lays an emphasis upon the “testing” motif; the use of the term *הַשְׁׁלֵך* in v 1 clearly signals this point. The *בָּרָךְ אֶבְרָךְ* of v 17 confirms the blessing motif of the second half. There is a sense in which the story begins with a child sacrifice motif, but in the second half of the narrative that fades and the concept of animal sacrifice surfaces. For this reason, it has been suggested that the purpose of the entire account is to present an etiology on animal sacrifice, and to set up a prohibition of child sacrifice.³

The employment of these various techniques not only improves the readability and interest level of the narrative, but also helps to generate meaning in one’s understanding of the text. This point will be further discussed following a closer look at the text itself.

TEXT

An acquaintance with the text of the story seems to be the basis for an attempt to understand some of the concepts it is intending to communicate. The episode of Gen 22:1-19 reads like a two-act play, with both a prologue and an epilogue. The literary structure of the passage suggests the following arrangement of the material:

Prologue, 22:1

Act I: Ordeal/Crisis, 22:2-10

Scene 1, 22:2-5

Scene 2, 22:6-10

³C. A. Simpson and W. R. Bowie, “Genesis,” *The Interpreter’s Bible* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, n.d.), 1. 645.

Act II: Resolution, 22:11-18

Scene 1, 22:11-14

Scene 2, 22:15-18

Epilogue, 22:19

Prologue, 22:1

That there is a conscious effort on the part of the writer to establish relationship between the Abraham cycle up to this point and the particular passage in focus seems evident from his opening statement: "Now it came about after these things. . . ."⁴ Its place in the saga of Abraham⁵ will be discussed later, so further detail is not necessary at this point. Suffice it to say that this opening line supplies an internal, textual connection to the preceding context, in addition to the more literary relationship presented in the later discussion.

An important observation is made by the writer at the outset of the narrative; it is an observation primarily for the benefit of the reader. The narrator is careful to explain that what he is about to describe represents a "test" (**תְּסִירָה**) of Abraham. This not only informs the reader of an important point, but also seems to give some direction to the significance of the story. It is an account of a test of Abraham by his God. Testing in regard to what? For what purpose? The answers to these questions are to a certain extent inherent within the text, and will be considered later.

While Abraham's response to God's address, seen in v 1, is undoubtedly a normal one, its appearance both here and again in v 11 seems too obvious to be viewed merely as "accidental." As previously suggested, it functions as a "formulaic expression" which helps to shape the narrative.

⁴This is a debated point. Von Rad says that "this narrative . . . has only a very loose connection with the preceding" (G. von Rad, *Genesis*; trans. J. H. Marks [OTL; revised edition; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972] 238; hereafter cited as von Rad, *Genesis*). However, Coats remarks: "A patriarchal itinerary scheme provides context for this story. . . . Unity with the context derives, however, not simply from structural context provided by an itinerary pattern, but of more importance, from unity in theological perspective with other Abrahamic tradition" (G. W. Coats, "Abraham's Sacrifice of Faith: A Form-Critical Study of Genesis 22," *Int* 27 [1973] 392; hereafter cited as Coats, "Abraham's Sacrifice").

⁵The term "saga" is used here in the sense of an extended series of stories revolving around a central figure; cf. R. B. Björnard, "An Unfortunate Blunder: A Tradition-Historical Study of Some Form-Critics' Use of the Word 'Saga'" (unpublished paper read at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Nov 18, 1978, at New Orleans, LA).

Act I: Ordeal/Crisis, 22:2-10

The main body of the narrative reads like a two-act drama, vv 2-10 forming the first act which has two scenes, vv 2-5 and vv 6-10. Act I, Scene 1 (vv 2-5) conveys the basic instructions given to Abraham along with his initial response. In “rapid-fire” succession the three imperatives (“take,” חָקַ; “go,” וָלַךְ; “offer,” וְהִעַלְתָּהוּ) of v 2 inform Abraham what it is that God expects of him. This is the test. Both the “hard-hitting” style of the divine instructions as well as the content of the instructions surface an issue that is perhaps one that the story is intended to explore. What is the nature of Abraham’s God? Twice (cf. Genesis 12) he has instructed Abraham to take certain actions which would result in close family ties being broken.

What is of almost equal amazement is the relative passivity, the “cool detachment” with which Abraham is seen to respond. By two sets of triads the writer methodically records the calculated actions of the patriarch: he “rose early” (וַיַּשְׁבַּת), “saddled his donkey” (וַיִּחְבֹּשׂ), “took lads” (וַיִּקְרַבּ), and “split wood” (וַיִּבְקַעַ), “arose” (וַיַּקְרַבּ), and “went” (וַיָּלַךְ).

Upon arriving at a place that was within eyesight of the destination (v 4), Abraham utters a statement that is most intriguing: “Stay here . . . I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship and return to you.” The first person plural verbs “worship” and “return to you” (וְנִשְׁתַּחֲווּ וְנִשְׁׁבוּהָ) raise an important question: Was this a hollow, evasive comment on Abraham’s part, or was it an expression of an honest faith which he genuinely possessed, based upon the promises which led up to and culminated in the birth of the son whose life was now seemingly in jeopardy? Perhaps the reader is to see some correlation between the manner in which Abraham responded to the divine directive and the statement in question.

Scene 2 (vv 6-10) of this portion of the narrative brings about an intense heightening of the tension; this is accomplished both through the development of the sequence of events as well as the various literary techniques employed by the writer to describe the sequence of events. As now seems characteristic of the writer, another triplet is employed in v 6: Abraham “took the wood” (וַיִּקְרַבּ), “laid it on Isaac” (וַיִּשְׁפַּעַת), and “took . . . the fire and the knife” (וַיִּקְרַבּ). The reader is then put off by the interlude: “So the two of them walked on together.” It is a statement which seems designed to continue the account, but more so to allow the anxiety level of the reader an opportunity to level off momentarily before introducing the next build-up of tension.

There are two possible approaches to the dialogue between father and son of vv 7 and 8 — the only recorded conversation between Abraham and Isaac in the entire story. The more traditional view

takes this, together with the "prediction" of v 5, as an evidence of Abraham's growing faith in his God and that he was expressing his firm belief that Isaac would either be spared or miraculously raised up, à la Heb 11:17-19. As one reviews the complete saga of Abraham, it is to be recognized that several indications of an "evolving faith" on the part of Abraham do appear; this may be cited in support of the understanding just referred to. On the other hand, however, many regard this as an "unconscious prophecy" by Abraham, a statement which in actuality was intended either to evade the question or to deceive the son.⁶ Again, it is true that deception was a part of Abraham's way of dealing with crisis situations (cf. Gen 12:10-20 and Gen 20:1-18). However, that this was a situation in which the truth could not be long withheld from Isaac must be kept in mind. This fact raises a question as to whether or not deception was even a viable option for the patriarch. Perhaps it is true that Abraham was trying to side-step the question and in so doing gave an answer which gave Isaac no cause for alarm yet in the end became reality.

The second use of the formulaic expression, "So the two of them walked on together," gives the reader an opportunity to prepare for the climax.

Father and son arrive at the appointed place. The slow, deliberate, calculated, blow-by-blow description of events at this point is most impressive. "The details are noted with frightful accuracy," says von Rad.⁷ However, not only is the reader impressed by the manner of description, he is also impressed by what is not said or what is only implied. The writer alludes to the passivity of Abraham in binding Isaac; that is accomplished by the lack of any particular emphasis being placed on that part of the description. Yet nothing is said about Isaac's conduct. The implied non-resistance of the son along with the willingness of the father suggest the idea that there was a commitment to the belief that God had the absolute right to make this demand upon both.

The narrative of v 10 is a continuation of the previous verse; this is seen in the fact that the long string of waw consecutives continues. Another triad is employed at the peak of the description of the crisis. Individual details at this point characterize the description: ". . . he stretched out his hand and took the knife. . ." At the very peak of the story a noticeable change in the descriptive method takes place, a change which seems to serve as a mediating factor between some of the binary elements which are found on either side of the crisis point.

⁶Von Rad, *Genesis*, 241; Coats, "Abraham's Sacrifice," 394.

⁷Von Rad, *Genesis*, 241.

A “string” of imperfects, apparently based upon the perfect of v 1 (**נִסְתַּחֲמָה**) characterizes the account up to this point. While the change at this point to the infinitive, **טַחַשׁ לְ**, is necessitated by the fact that he did not, in fact, slay his son, it also seems to denote inner disposition.⁸ He fully intended to carry through with the action initially required. For all intents and purposes, Isaac had been slain.

Act II: Resolution, 22:11-18

The intervention by the angel of YHWH, which is seen in Scene 1 (vv 11-14), is a welcome turn of events. In spite of the opening statement of the story, the reader tends to wonder by the time he reaches v 10, whether God was actually going to let Abraham carry out his intention. Though great relief is experienced by the reader and presumably Abraham, the patriarch, nevertheless, continues to act in the same “restrained” manner as before. Crenshaw remarks: “Most astonishingly, we do not hear a word of rejoicing when the ordeal is ended by an urgent command. . . .”⁹ For the first time he notices the ram, he retrieves it, and offers it in place of his son. There is no hint that this sacrifice was rendered in response to divine directive.

A good example of paronomasia is evident at this point in the narrative. In response to Isaac’s question, Abraham had responded, “**אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֶה**.” According to v 14, Abraham called the name of the place “**יְהוָה יִרְאֶה**.” To add to this, the comment of the angel is noteworthy: “. . . I know that you fear God . . .” (*yere* **אֱלֹהִים**) (v 12). This latter comment by the angel signals an important link to the statement of purpose for the testing.

Scene 2, vv 15-18, records the divine response to the now proven patriarch. That the blessing pronounced in vv 17-18 is directly related to Abraham’s willingness to offer Isaac is clearly established by the redundant expression of v 16: “. . . because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son. . . .” The announcement of the blessing is presented in the now characteristic style of the writer, another triad. The blessing formula which appears in the narrative is not entirely new to the Abraham cycle (cf. Genesis 12, 15, 17). However, the form in which it is seen here is somewhat intensified over previous similar formulas. As an example, the “I will bless you” (**וְאֶבְרָכֶךָ**) of Gen 12:2 now becomes “I will greatly bless you”

⁸“A noteworthy shift from finite verb to infinitive takes place in the description of Abraham’s intention. Thus one cannot miss the purpose of these actions described with such minute detail and in technical language of the sacrificial cult” (J. L. Crenshaw, “Journey into Oblivion: A Structural Analysis of Genesis 22:1-19,” *Sounding* 58 [1975] 248; hereafter cited as Crenshaw, “Journey”).

⁹Crenshaw, “Journey,” 252.

(בָּרֶךְ אַבְרָהָם), Gen 22:17. As Speiser suggests, the promise that Abraham's descendants would ". . . possess the gate of their enemies . . ." (v 17) ". . . refers to capture of the opponent's administrative and military centers."¹⁰ A similar blessing was invoked upon Rebekah by her brothers prior to her departure for Canaan to become the wife of Isaac (cf. Gen 24:60).

Epilogue, 22:19

The notice that "Abraham returned to his young men" and that together they returned to Beer-sheba is of special interest because of what it *does not* say. Rather obvious is the complete lack of any reference to Isaac in this epilogue. There is no clear indication that he returned with his father; neither is there any clear indication that he remained at Moriah. The text is silent. For this reason Crenshaw refers to this as the "Journey into Oblivion."¹¹ This fact seems to point the reader's attention toward Abraham rather than Isaac, and justifiably so, for this is not a story of the sacrifice of Isaac, it is the story of the testing and obedience of Abraham.

PURPOSE/INTENT

It is doubtful that anyone would deny the moving nature of this account, but what contribution does it make to the Abraham cycle in particular and to Hebrew thought in general? How does it make that contribution? It is not only important to discover the meaning, but also to discover how it has meaning. The narrative of Genesis 22 conveys meaning as it is read both diachronically and synchronically: diachronically, it seems to take on meaning as it is seen as the climax to the Abraham cycle; synchronically, it generates meaning as it is viewed as a paradigm on certain sociological issues.

The relationship of this incident to the entire Abraham cycle

One's appreciation of this moving account is increased when it is viewed diachronically in the light of the entire Abraham cycle: Gen 11:27-25:11. It appears as the climax to the saga of Abraham. All that precedes this event leads up to it; what follows almost seems anticlimactic. The introduction to the Abraham cycle (Gen 11:27-30) emphasizes the point that Sarai, Abram's wife, is barren. After long years of barrenness, anxiety and struggling, a son is born to Abraham and Sarah (Gen 21:1-7). Almost as though with a vengeance, the saga leaps over several years and hastens to the story which portrays the

¹⁰E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB; New York: Doubleday, Inc., 1964) 164.

¹¹Crenshaw, "Journey," 245.

fruit of the once barren womb as being in grave danger.¹² However, it is not just a son who is in danger; it is an entire future, a potential nation. All that Abraham had lived for is suddenly at stake. If his God's word is to be believed, all the nations of the earth would somehow be affected by this demanding order. Either way Abraham might respond, it appeared as though the covenant was in danger. If he were to disobey, the covenant may be in jeopardy; on the other hand, if he were to obey God and slay Isaac, the covenant likewise stood in jeopardy. Abraham, indeed, was on the horns of a dilemma; and the demands that were placed upon him placed him in a situation in which it appeared that he could not win.

When viewed as a whole the Abraham cycle is a study in progression, development, maturing. Perhaps as a regular reminder that the patriarch is very human, there appear stories, strategically located, which clearly portray his vulnerability. While these accounts are in no way to be minimized, the overall trend of the saga is upward; each segment seems to build upon and add to the previous ones. A call and promise are issued, to which there is response (Gen 12:1-9); Abram demonstrates graciousness to Lot (Gen 13:1-13), after which Jehovah appears to him and reiterates the promise (Gen 13:14-18). In turn, Abram spares Lot (Gen 14:1-16); later, the promise is formalized as a binding covenant (Gen 15:1-21). The covenant is expanded (Gen 17:1-21) and sealed by circumcision (Gen 17:22-26). The seed aspect of the covenant is particularized (Gen 18:1-15); Abraham intercedes for Lot (Gen 18:16-33). At last the promised son is born (Gen 21:1-7).

The sequence of these events suggests that both Abraham and the reader are being prepared for something. The cycle is going somewhere; it is not static. At almost any point along the way, the reader can stop, look behind him, and see that the plot has advanced; Abraham has progressed. Difficult circumstances have consistently presented themselves, and at times the patriarch has reacted in a very immature and deceitful manner. Yet overall, the relationship of these individual stories one to another makes the point that Abraham was "growing up."

Then comes the ordeal. One is inclined to believe that had such a sore test come earlier in his experience, Abraham would not have been able to cope with it. Hence, the climax of the cycle comes and with it the most formidable test of the patriarch's life: God orders

¹²The amount of time between the birth of Isaac and the Genesis 22 incident is unknown; estimates seem to range from 7-25 years. The term employed here, יָמִין is no real help in that it is used in reference to an unborn son (Judg 13:5, 7, 8, 12) as well as the sons of Samuel who were ministering in the Tabernacle (1 Sam 2:17). Gen 21:34 says, "And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days."

him to slay his long-awaited son. The nature of the test and the manner in which Abraham faced it are issues which are taken up in the following portions of the study. Suffice it to say here that there seems to be some evidence that this event marked a change in the patriarch's life.

What the term הַמְלֵאָה contributes to the narrative

That the narrator is so careful to introduce his account as a "test" is both obvious and important. It is obvious because it is the first statement employed by the writer in this narrative sequence. The importance of this point is seen in several different ways. First, it is important for the reader's benefit. So it was viewed by the writer, for he informs the reader from the very outset that this is "only a test." Abraham, of course, was not privy to that information. The reason for that appears obvious. It would not have been a genuine test if he had been informed that it was "only a test." Nothing would have been proven through it, had he known.

Second, it is important because it contributes to one's understanding of the God-man relationship; specifically, it gives insight into an apparently new dynamic in the Elohim/Yahweh-Abraham cycle. This is the first, and the only, time in the Abraham saga where the nature of a particular event is so labeled. Nevertheless, its use here suggests that from Yahweh's perspective, Abraham needed to be tested.¹³ There is no clear indication why He deemed such a test necessary; only that He did. No unusually troublesome flaws in Abraham's character have been brought to the surface up to this point. On the contrary, Yahweh appears to have looked with favor upon the patriarch.¹⁴

With no clear explanation of this question coming from the text itself, one is left to offer several possibilities for consideration.¹⁵ One possibility is that the test is a clear indication of the somewhat tyrannical nature of Abraham's God. Yahweh, a young, ambitious deity, was perhaps attempting to demonstrate his rather cynical

¹³Crenshaw makes the following thought-provoking remarks: "In a sense the story bears the character of a qualifying test. The fulfillment of the promise articulated in Genesis 12 and reaffirmed at crucial stages during Abraham's journey through alien territory actualizes the divine intention to bless all nations by means of one man. Abraham's excessive love for the son of promise comes dangerously close to idolatry and frustrates the larger mission. Thus is set the stage for the qualifying test." Crenshaw, "Journey," 249.

¹⁴That this is true is evidenced by the initial promises of Gen 12:1-3, the formalizing of the promises into a covenant in Genesis 15, the statement that "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness" (Gen 15:6), the fulfillment of the promise of a son, the manifold blessings of Yahweh on Abraham, *et al.*

attitude toward one of his subjects/devotees. In this writer's opinion, to establish such a suggestion as legitimate would require much more evidence than this one passage can be construed to present. Another suggestion is that the key to understanding the reason behind the test is to be found in a study of the term **נֹתֶן**, which the writer employs. This suggestion brings our attention back to the original point regarding the importance of the identification of this as a "testing" experience by the writer.

A third reason why the writer's opening statement is important, therefore, is that it may hold the key to understanding the reason why God tested Abraham as he did. The term **נֹתֶן** is employed, in addition to the usage in Genesis 22, eight other times in a context where Elohim/Yahweh is said to be the "tester." In six (Exod 15:22-26; 16:4; 20:18-20; Deut 8:2, 16; Judg 2:21-22; 3:1-4) of these cases, Israel was the object of His testing; in 2 Chron 32:31 Hezekiah, king of Judah, was the one tested; in Ps 26:2 David appealed to Yahweh to test him. In five of the six cases where Yahweh/Elohim speaks of "testing" Israel, the context of each clearly shows a relationship between the motif of "testing" and his concern over the nation's obedience to his commandments/statutes/law/ways.¹⁵ In Exod 20:18-20 the obedience concept is implied though not specifically stated, and interestingly enough, the subject of the nation's fear of God is a central issue, as it is in Gen 22:1, 12. Again in the Ps 26:2 occurrence of the term, the obedience concept is implied when David says: "Prove me, O Lord, and try (**נֹתֶן**) me; test my heart and my mind." Of Hezekiah, the Chronicler observes:

And so in the matter of the envoys of the princes of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to try him and to know all that was in his heart (2 Chron 32:31).

If the pattern seen in the use of the term **נֹתֶן**, when Yahweh/Elohim is said to be the "tester," can serve as a legitimate key for understanding its use in Gen 22:1, then one may conclude that the reason Yahweh deemed it necessary to test Abraham was to know what was in his heart, to test his obedience to and fear of Yahweh when his promised and beloved son was at stake.

¹⁵In addition to the two suggestions which appear in the following discussion, see Plaut's discussion in W. G. Plaut, *The Torah: A Modern Commentary. Vol. I: Genesis* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1974) 210-11.

¹⁶Exod 15:22-26; 16:4; Deut 8:2, 16; Judg 2:21, 22; 3:1-4.

Exploring relationships

One of the functions of this particular story seems to be that of exploring relationships: relationships between man and his God as well as relationships between a father and his sons. Both of these areas of investigation are in themselves fairly complex. An attempt will be made here to probe both realms in an effort to understand the dynamics involved in these two areas of relationships. The latter one seems to be the result of or the outgrowth of the former; therefore, they will be analyzed in the same order as they have initially been mentioned.

The God/man relationship is explored at different levels in this narrative. The images of both God and man are studied to some degree; the demands of God are seen in contrast to the response of man. Fundamental to the account is an obvious question: "What kind of a God would subject a man to such an ordeal?" This, of course, immediately raises the whole issue of the image of God as seen in Genesis 22. Responses to the question vary. In large measure one's response depends upon which aspect of the narrative is emphasized. If the emphasis is upon the initial command to sacrifice Isaac and the concept of the divine deception involved, the view of the image of God obviously will be somewhat negative. On the other hand, if the emphasis is placed upon the fact that Yahweh stayed the hand of Abraham and subsequently increased his blessing upon the patriarch, one's conclusions concerning the image of God would agree with de Vaux, who commented: "Any Israelite who heard this story would take it to mean that his race owed its existence to the mercy of God, and its prosperity to the obedience of their great ancestor."¹⁷

More, however, is to be gained by viewing the image of God as portrayed in Gen 22:1-10 in a broader context. When seen in the perspective of both that which precedes and follows these verses, a noticeable "role reversal" occurs in this problematic section. In Genesis 12-21 Yahweh is depicted as the deity who desires to bless greatly the patriarch; the promises abound in these chapters. Not only is he seen as one who promises blessing; he is unmistakably set forth as the one who fulfills the promised blessings. Genesis 21 records the birth of the son of promise, Isaac. Suddenly, a reversal of roles occurs. The God of promise and blessing appears to become the antagonist, the tyrant, the adversary, the God of contradiction. In the minds of some, the problem is not so much in the initial demand

¹⁷R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel; Vol. II: Religious Institutions* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965) 443.

which Yahweh/Elohim made on Abraham as with the fact that he allowed Abraham to think right up to the very last moment that he was actually serious when in fact he was only testing Abraham.

Just as the careful student of the saga of Abraham must see the role reversal just described, he is also obliged to see another drastic reversal in Gen 22:11-18 — a reversal in the portrayal of the image of God back to that which prevails in Genesis 12-21. This second reversal sheds a different light on the first reversal. Certainly there should be no attempt to minimize the image of Yahweh in Gen 22:1-10. There is no question that a "different side" of Yahweh is to be seen there. At the same time, however, one must reckon with the double role-reversal which is evident in the story. But, as demonstrated elsewhere in this study, Yahweh/Elohim is to be understood as a God who sorely tests his subjects. According to Exodus 15, Israel needed water; in Exodus 16 and Deuteronomy 8, the nation needed bread; Judges 2 and 3 suggest that the nation needed military assistance. While the exact circumstances differ in the Genesis 22 incident, the basic point is the same. Yahweh/Elohim is set forth by the biblical writers as a God who takes his servants through perilous situations for the purpose of testing them. In almost every one of these examples, including Genesis 22, there is evidence of divine provision as a means of survival through the experience. This is not at all unusual in the realm of religion. The religions of the ancient Near East were characterized by deities who demanded devotion; in some cases demonstration of one's devotion was evidenced through child sacrifice. The unique feature in Abraham's experience was that his God stopped him from completing the act. Thus the double role-reversal shows itself to be significant in the story.

A second fundamental question must be asked concerning the story: "What kind of a man would respond to such a command in the manner in which Abraham did?" Almost as important as the image-of-God motif is the image of man in relationship to his God as it is explored in this fascinating account. Once again, there is difference of opinion on this question. In fact, the same individual sometimes experiences mixed emotions in this regard, as Kierkegaard demonstrates:

Why then did Abraham do it? For God's sake and (in complete identity with this) for his own sake. He did it for God's sake because God required this proof of his faith; for his own sake he did it in order that he might furnish the proof. The unity of these two points of view is perfectly expressed by the word which has always been used to characterize this situation: It is a trial, a temptation. A temptation — but what does that mean? What ordinarily tempts a man is that which would keep him from doing his duty, but in this case the temptation is itself the ethical . . . which would keep him from doing God's will.

Therefore, though Abraham arouses my admiration, he at the same time appalls me. . . . He who has explained this riddle has explained my life.¹⁸

An interesting and perhaps significant ingredient is to be gleaned by tracing the role-reversal pattern in the case of Abraham. With one major exception, it is opposite that of Yahweh/Elohim's. It is not at all unusual to find Abraham arguing with Elohim throughout Genesis 12-21. Whereas in that segment of the cycle God is the "blessing," Abraham is somewhat the "antagonist." However in Genesis 22, where he is called upon to do something of a far more severe nature than anything else up to this point, a clear reversal is seen. He does not argue with God, in spite of the fact that to obey would mean the death of his long-awaited and dearly loved and favored son. There is no hint even of any hesitancy on Abraham's part, though to actually follow through would place the covenant in jeopardy in addition to suffering the loss of his son. How is this phenomenon to be explained? Does his response represent a "blind obedience," which in present times seems to have been operative to some degree in Jonestown, Guyana? Or does his response indicate that he had reached a level of maturity and obedience which enabled him to carry out God's instructions and at the same time leave the consequences to God? In answer to this perplexing problem, it may be significant to note that there is no evidence in Genesis 22, or in the remainder of the Abraham cycle, of a reversal back to the image which characterized Abraham prior to the Genesis 22 incident. It is true that there is no strong or positive evidence in the rest of the Abraham saga that he was a "different Abraham" from this point on. However, the failure of the text of the cycle to allude to a second role reversal may be significant in this respect.

Further evidence that the tale seems to be exploring relationships between God and man is the heavy emphasis which is placed upon testing/obedience and fear of God/love of son. It seems quite apparent that there is a direct relationship between the discussion concerning the image of God/image of man and testing/obedience as well as fear of God/love of son. Both of these latter issues seem to be engaged at a level different from the former matter. Allusion has already been made to the fact that the writers of the OT portray Yahweh as a God who tested his subjects. That is not so unusual or surprising. Abraham's unflinching obedience is somewhat more puzzling. He appears as a man who believed that the God whom he

¹⁸S. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1945) 89-90.

worshipped had the right to make such a demand of him and that the sacrifice of Isaac was the right thing for him.

It seems significant that both comparisons and contrasts can be drawn between this experience and Abraham's initial encounter with Yahweh, as told in Gen 12:1ff. Both experiences began with a divine emphatic imperative, "go."¹⁹ Both situations involved going to an "undesignated place": ". . . to the land that I will show you" (Gen 12:1); ". . . upon one of the mountains of which I shall tell you" (Gen 22:2). In both cases a "sacrifice of family" was required: in the former experience, it was to leave family behind; in the latter, it was an actual sacrifice of his son. This final confrontation by Yahweh was, in a sense, not a completely new experience for the patriarch, although obviously the most trying. Abraham's entire experience with Yahweh, beginning with the initial call and promise, may be viewed as preparing him for this final, supreme test. While the general direction of Abraham's response in both cases was toward obedience, in the first situation there was only partial obedience, while in the last situation there was total obedience. This fact "puts a little distance" between the two experiences. The major contrast, of course, between the two is the fact that the first imperative was accompanied by a promise of blessing; there was no such promise which came with the imperative of Gen 22:2. In fact, this latter imperative seemed to place all the foregoing promises in jeopardy. This set of facts greatly increases the distance between the two situations. But that distance is then reduced by the fact that both responses are followed by blessing from Yahweh. Sarna, commenting on a comparative study of these two passages, draws some conclusions which deserve consideration because they relate the study to the matter of exploring the relationship between Yahweh and the patriarch:

The great difference between the two events is what constitutes the measure of Abraham's progress in his relationship to God. The first divine communication carried with it the promise of reward. The final one held no such expectation. On the contrary, by its very nature it could mean nothing less than the complete nullification of the covenant

¹⁹The form is נְלֵךְ. Cassuto remarks that this form ". . . is not *without* specific signification." He further observes: "In both cases Abram undergoes an ordeal: here he has to leave behind his aged father and his environment and go to a country that is unknown to him; there he has to take leave of his family circle for a little while, and of his cherished son forever; his son, it is true, will accompany him for the first part of the way, but only so that he might bid him farewell forever. Thereafter he must go on his way *alone*, the way of absolute discipline and devotion. In both instances the test is made harder by the fact that the destination of the journey is not stated beforehand." Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis. Part II: From Noah to Abraham*; trans. I. Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1964) 309-10.

and the frustration forever of all hope of posterity. Ishmael had already departed. Now Isaac would be gone, too. Tradition has rightly seen in Abraham the exemplar of steadfast, disinterested loyalty to God.²⁰

A third level of interest in regard to the Yahweh/man relationship is the set of binary elements: fear of God/love of son. There appears to be something of a relationship between this and the testing/obedience motif, yet the fear of God/love of son struggle goes beyond or becomes more particularized than the former. Gen 22:2 sets up the frustration by the way in which Yahweh referred to Isaac, "... your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love." At the point where the angel stops Abraham, the clear pronouncement is made, "... now I know that you fear God ..." (Gen 22:12). The implication seems to be that the fear of God on Abraham's part was in question because of his love for his son. Two factors in the text unite to mediate between these two elements. The description of the raised knife in the hand of the patriarch together with the writer's employment of the infinitive **טַהֲשֵׁל** clearly indicates Abraham's intention of slaying his son. An inner disposition reduces the distance between Abraham's fear of God and love of Isaac.

A second major realm of relationships is explored through this narrative: a horizontal realm. The relationship of a father to his sons is a theme that is investigated. At this point it is instructive to place two incidents side-by-side. The expulsion of Ishmael, as recorded in Genesis 21, and the binding of Isaac, described in Genesis 22, lead to an interesting study in comparisons and contrasts when analyzed together. Generally speaking, these two segments of the Abraham cycle illustrate the pattern, seen often in the OT, of the younger son becoming the favored son over the firstborn.²¹ As a matter of fact, this case sets the pace for those which follow in the patriarchal sequence. Ishmael, the result of Abraham's attempt to "help God fulfill His promise," was rejected by Yahweh and eventually expelled by Abraham. Isaac, the younger of the two sons, is described as having been sovereignly chosen by Yahweh and favored by Abraham. This, in itself, is not foreign to the biblical record; but the paradox is seen in the fact that Abraham became quite distressed over Sarah's instructions to cast Hagar and Ishmael out, yet when God instructed him to slay Isaac, the favored son, there was no evidence of any reluctance whatsoever on the father's part.

²⁰N. M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis: The Heritage of Biblical Israel* (New York: Schocken, 1974) 163.

²¹See Genesis 27 (Jacob) and Genesis 37 (Joseph).

A number of interesting comparisons and contrasts can be observed between the two events. The following chart summarizes the main details:

Ishmael in danger
Genesis 21

Isaac in danger
Genesis 22

CONTRASTS

Crisis created as a result of a human directive: Sarah tells Abraham to cast out Hagar and Ishmael (v 10)

Abraham shows real reluctance to follow through (v 11)

God refers to Ishmael as "Abraham's seed," יַעֲקֹב (v 13)

Sarah aware of the circumstances; she was the "perpetrator" (vv 9-10)

Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, could not stand to watch her son die (vv 15-16)

Action takes place in the wilderness of Beer-sheba (v 14)

Crisis created as a result of a divine directive: God tells Abraham to offer Isaac as a burnt offering (v 2)

Abraham shows no real reluctance to follow through (vv 3ff.)

God refers to Isaac as "Abraham's son," לְאַבִּיךְ (v 2)

Sarah apparently not aware of the circumstances

Abraham, the father of Isaac, did not shrink from observing (in fact, participating in) the death of his son

Action takes place in the land of Moriah (vv 2-4)

COMPARISONS

Firstborn cast out, becomes a nation

God promised to make a nation of Ishmael because he was Abraham's seed (v 13)

Abraham "rose up early in the morning" to follow through (v 14)

Divine intervention occurs; angel of God calls out to Hagar; reversal of danger (v 17)

Firstborn cast out, becomes a great nation

God promised to make a great nation of Isaac because Abraham had not withheld him (vv 16-18)

Abraham "rose up early in the morning" to follow through (v 3)

Divine intervention occurs; angel of Yahweh calls out to Abraham; reversal of danger (vv 11 ff.)

| | |
|---|--|
| Water (life-preserving) was providentially provided (v 19) | Ram (life-preserving) was providentially provided (v 13) |
| Hagar saw the heretofore unseen well (v 19) | Abraham saw the heretofore unseen ram (v 13) |
| Hagar appropriates the water without a specific divine directive (v 19) | Abraham appropriates the ram without a specific divine directive (v 13) |
| Hagar, an Egyptian, takes a wife from Egypt for Ishmael (v 21) | Abraham, a Mesopotamian, takes a wife from Mesopotamia for Isaac (Genesis 24) |

CONCLUSION

It seems apparent that one of the themes that the story presents as it is read diachronically is the testing and obedience of Abraham. That concept keeps reappearing in several different ways. That is not meant to imply that this diachronic motif exhausts the contribution of this celebrated story. One is inclined to ask the question: Is it really possible, on the basis of the details of the story as they are given, to know what was going on in the heart and mind of the patriarch? What do his unusual reactions mean?

In the synchronic direction, the account contributes to the exploration of certain religious and sociological relationships: God/man and father/son. But is there more? After some fairly extensive study, looking at the passage in many different ways and from several perspectives, it is obvious that the passage warrants further attention.



THE PROBLEM OF THE MUSTARD SEED

JOHN A. SPROULE

IN this article the author seeks to demonstrate exegetically and botanically that our Lord Jesus Christ was not merely using the language of accommodation or even proverbial language, necessarily, when he referred to the mustard seed as the “least” of all seeds. The author appeals to the language of the text, the context, and to expert testimony in the field of botany to show that the mustard seed was indeed the smallest garden-variety seed known to man in Bible times.

THE PROBLEM

Matt 13:32 (and its parallel in Mark 4:30-32) seems to be a favorite target for opponents of the inerrancy of the autographs of Scripture. In the context of this passage, Jesus, in a parable, describes the phenomenal growth of the Kingdom of Heaven. He compares that growth with the growth of a grain of mustard (*σινάπεως*) which is sown in a field and grows to be larger than any of the garden herbs (*λαχάνων*). Jesus refers to the mustard seed as the *least* (*μικρότερον*) of all seeds (*σπερμάτων*).

Daniel Fuller of Fuller Theological Seminary, arguing for cultural accommodation, states that Jesus referred to the mustard seed as the smallest of seeds when, in fact, the mustard seed is not the smallest seed known botanically to man.¹ He argues that Jesus was accommodating his language to the knowledge of the people. In short, what Christ said was inaccurate, but it met the need. Harold Lindsell refers to one of Fuller’s public lectures and writes:

Dr. Fuller alleges that botanically we know that there are smaller seeds than the mustard seed. And that is true. Then he argues that Jesus accommodates Himself to the ignorance of the people to whom He was

¹D. P. Fuller, *Evangelism and Biblical Inerrancy* (unpublished monograph, Dallas Theological Seminary, n.d.) 18. This work first came to this writer’s attention in 1968.

speaking, since they believed this. But it constitutes an error, and the presence of one error invalidates the claim to biblical inerrancy.²

Lindsell, in offering suggested solutions to the apparent problem, appeals to a suggestion made nearly a century ago by John A. Broadus. Lindsell writes:

The *American Commentary* says of this passage that it was popular language, and it was the intention of the speaker to communicate the fact that the mustard seed was “the smallest that his hearers were accustomed to sow.” And indeed this may well be the case. In that event there was no error. If the critics of Scripture wish to use the intention of the writer, this is one place it can be used in favor of inerrancy.³

An alternative appeal is made by Lindsell to Matthew Henry’s suggested reading of the passage — the mustard seed “which is one of the least of all seeds.”⁴ Lindsell does not believe that the Greek is sufficiently clear at this point to affirm that Jesus actually was saying that the mustard seed is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. He writes:

He [Jesus] was saying it is less than all the seeds. What must be determined is what the words “all the seeds” mean here. If Jesus was talking about the seeds commonly known to the people of that day, the effect of His words was different from what they would have been if He was speaking of all the seeds on the earth. When the possibility exists for a translation that fulfills the intention of the speaker and does not constitute error, that passage is to be preferred above one that does the opposite. And when two possibilities exist, why should not the benefit of any doubt be given in favor of the one that fulfills what the Scripture teaches about inerrancy? To choose the other route leaves behind the implication that one is seeking out error and trying to establish it on flimsy grounds.⁵

Lindsell is certainly right in his position that the Bible, with such few apparent errors still unresolved, should be given the benefit of any doubts. However, his two suggested solutions to the problem do not go into sufficient detail as they stand, although they are certainly moving in the right direction. All that seems to be needed is a more detailed extension of both of his suggestions.

²H. Lindsell, *The Battle For The Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976) 169. Lindsell cites an unpublished paper delivered by D. P. Fuller at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. Quite likely this is the same work by Fuller referred to above.

³Ibid. Lindsell cites J. A. Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1886) 296.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

Several years ago (1968-69), this writer investigated the "problem" of the mustard seed.⁶ It is the purpose of this article to suggest a solution which is more satisfactory than most of the suggested solutions and which squares with the Greek text, the context, common sense, and the Bible's teaching concerning its own inerrancy.

THE SUGGESTED SOLUTION

In the NT there is a blurring of distinction between the comparative and superlative forms of the adjective.⁷ The comparative form μικρότερον appears to serve for both the comparative and superlative forms of the adjective μικρός, and only its usage in the immediate context, as Jesus understood and used it, and its use in the parallel passage, Mark 4:30-32, can determine how it is to be translated. Alford argues that the word should not be taken as a superlative and that the phrase should not be pressed too literally since the mustard seed was proverbial of anything small.⁸ Mare, in a scholarly treatment of this text and of the modern translations of the comparative forms in it, also argues for the comparative use here.⁹ He appeals to the anarthrous construction of μικρότερον in arguing his case, but such an appeal is inconclusive. Significant here is Robertson's statement:

The comparative form, therefore, has two ideas, that of contrast or duality (*Gegensatz*) and of the relative comparative (*Steigerung*), though the first use was the original. *Relative comparison is, of course, the dominant idea in most of the NT examples* [italics mine], though as already remarked, the notion of duality always lies in the background.¹⁰

Thus, since relative comparison is dominant with the comparative and in consideration of the immediate context (where it could be taken as comparative but combined with the idea of *totality*, i.e., "less than all seeds," making it *essentially* superlative, it seems best to regard μικρότερον as superlative. Mark's addition of τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς in the parallel passage (Mark 4:31) would further support this. Let it be

⁶J. A. Sproule, *An Exegesis of New Testament Passages Cited As Errant By Evangelicals* (unpublished Master of Theology Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1969) 7-11.

⁷A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 668.

⁸H. Alford, *The Greek Testament*, rev. by E. F. Harrison (4 vols.; Chicago: Moody, 1958), I. 144.

⁹W. H. Mare, "The Smallest Mustard Seed — Matthew 13:32," *Grace Journal* 9 (1968) 3-11.

¹⁰Robertson, *Grammar*, 663.

granted then that Jesus *did* declare the mustard seed to be the least of all seeds. Is error involved?

The problem of error finds its solution in the kind of seed to which Jesus was referring. The mustard seed referred to was most likely the *Sinapis* (*σινάπι*) *nigra*, or "black mustard," cultivated to produce a useful product, namely, mustard and colza oil.¹¹ Botanically, the smallest of all seeds is the orchid seed. However, the smallest garden-variety seed (*λάχανον*) in Palestine, or the entire eastern world, at the time of Christ was the mustard seed. This is true today. Shinners writes:

The smallest of all seeds are those of orchids. The account under "ORCHIDS" in L. H. Bailey's *Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture* has this statement: The seeds of orchids are minute and extremely numerous, the number in a single capsule have been estimated for different species from several thousand to over a million. There are 13 genera with a total of 61 species of this family described in the *Flora of Syria, Palestine and Sinai*, Vol. 2, by George E. Post (2nd ed. by John Edward Dinsmore, 1932). These are not the huge florist's kinds that the ordinary person thinks of first . . . , but they are large enough to be noticeable as wild flowers . . . *the mustard seed would indeed have been the smallest of those likely to have been noticed by the people at the time of Christ.* The principal field crops (such as barley, wheat, lentils, beans) *have much larger seeds*, as do vetches and other plants which might have been present as weeds (the biblical tares) among grain. . . . There are various weeds and wild flowers belonging to the mustard, amaranth, pigweed, and chickweed families with seeds as small or smaller than mustard itself, but they would not have been particularly known or noticed by the inhabitants. Mustard occurs both wild and planted. The seeds of basil (*Ocium basilicum*, in the mint family) are nearly as small as those of mustard, and the plant was used in ancient times, though not so much as in later periods (medieval and modern). The only modern crop plant of importance with smaller seeds than mustard is tobacco, but this plant is of American origin and was not grown in the Old World until the 16th century and later. . . . In absolute terms, the number of species in Christ's time was almost the same as at present, the chief differences being the disappearance of some (mostly in quite modern times), and the development of hybrids or garden varieties (which aren't true species).¹²

¹¹H. N. and A. L. Moldenke, *Plants of the Bible* (Waltham: Chronica Botanica, 1952) 59.

¹²L. H. Shinners, private interview held at the Herbarium at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, June, 1968. Dr. Shinners received the Ph.D. degree in Botany from the University of Wisconsin in 1943. He has served as Research Associate at the Milwaukee Public Museum and is a founding member of the Southwestern Association of Naturalists. He is the founder, editor, and publisher of the journal,

Shinners, an expert in the field of botany, has been quoted at length to show that the mustard seed in Bible times was the smallest *garden-variety* seed and, with the exception of tobacco, remains so today. That Jesus was referring to *garden-variety* mustard seed is evident from the context. His analogy is between the growth of the Kingdom and the growth of an intentionally planted seed, i.e., *garden-variety* ("... which a man took and sowed in his field"). In every NT instance where σπέρμα is used botanically, it is used in an agricultural sense of being sowed (cf. Matt 13:24, 27, 37; Mark 4:31; 2 Cor 9:10). Also, on every such occasion, it is used in connection with the verb σπείρω which means "to sow." The derivation of σπέρμα from σπείρω further augments the argument that Jesus' use of σπέρμα in Matt 13:32 referred to that which was planted by man. This conclusion is fully supported by both classical usage and the papyri evidence.¹³

This argument is further buttressed by the obvious association between σπερμάτων and λαχάνων ("herbs") in the text. Liddell and Scott describe λαχάνον as occurring mostly in the plural and referring to garden herbs, potsherds, vegetables, and greens, in opposition to wild plants.¹⁴ Bornkamm defines λαχάνον as "edible plants," "vegetables," which are grown in the field or garden.¹⁵

CONCLUSION

Therefore, it may be concluded that when Jesus called the mustard seed the least of all seeds, the reference was to *garden-variety* seeds, and *Sinapis nigra* was the smallest of all such seeds.¹⁶ This is a reasonable conclusion and it squares with both the Greek and the context of the disputed passages.

Postscript

A second defense against the claim of errancy is that Jesus was speaking *proverbially*, since the great contrast between the very small

SIDA Contributions to Botany. Dr. Shinners has been guest lecturer at the Annual Symposium on Systematics at the Missouri Botanical Gardens and at the Smithsonian Institute. He presently serves as Director of the Herbarium at Southern Methodist University, the largest herbarium in the southwest, containing more than 318,000 botanical specimens from all parts of the world.

¹³H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (7th ed.; New York: Harper & Bros., 1889) 1414; for the papyri evidence, see J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930) 583.

¹⁴Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*, 879.

¹⁵G. Bornkamm, "λαχάνον," *TDNT* 4 (1968) 65.

¹⁶Mare, "The Smallest Mustard Seed," 7.

mustard seed and its ultimate herb was proverbial of great growth.¹⁷ Proverbial language is not errant language. Scientific precision need not be expected of proverbial expressions, just as today, when newspapers announce official "sunset" and "sunrise" times without evoking a cry of "error!" Both arguments presented herein adequately show that *no* error is involved in Matt 13:32.

¹⁷H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash* (4 vols.; München: C. H. Beck, 1961), I. 669.

INTERPRETIVE CHALLENGES RELATING TO HABAKKUK 2:4b

GEORGE J. ZEMEK, JR.

THE worthy reputation of Hab 2:4b in both Jewish and Christian circles is well attested. For example, "the Talmud records the famous remark of R. Simlai (Makkot 23b), 'Moses gave Israel 613 commandments. David reduced them to 10, Isaiah to 2, but Habakkuk to one: *the righteous shall live by his faith.*'"¹ New Testament theology is also built upon that text's firm foundation. Concerning Paul's utilization, Johnson appropriately asserts: "'The just shall live by faith,' — it is, without question, near the soul of Pauline theology."² Historically, the testimony of the text as a theological benchmark continued to grow. The preeminent illustration of this phenomenon was the text's catalytic effect in leading to the Reformation: "Habakkuk's great text, with his son Paul's comments and additions, became the banner of the Protestant Reformation in the hands of Habakkuk's grandson, Martin Luther."³ Consequently, Feinberg's appraisal of Hab 2:4b should not be regarded as an overstatement: "The key to the whole Book of Habakkuk . . . the central theme of all the Scriptures."⁴

In spite of this reputation, the text has occasioned many critical investigations. These studies range from those immediately associated with the text to those which are tangential; in terms of result, they range from those which are destructive to those which are constructive. This endeavor is intended to be a general survey of the most significant challenges relating to Hab 2:4b.

Since the text is particularly strategic, every conservative student of the Word of God has the theological responsibility of sharpening his focus on the tensions manifested by these studies. Also, this

*The author would like to thank Mr. William D. Barrick for his labors in reference to the revision of the format of this paper for publication.

¹S. M. Lehrman, "Habakkuk," in *The Twelve Prophets*, Soncino Books of the Bible, ed. by A. Cohen (London: Soncino, 1948) 219.

²S. L. Johnson, Jr., "The Gospel That Paul Preached," *BSac* 128 (1971) 327.

³Ibid., 328.

⁴C. L. Feinberg, *The Major Messages of the Minor Prophets: Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Malachi* (New York: American Board of Missions to the Jews, 1951) 23.

responsibility cannot be avoided merely because an ultimate resolution of all the tensions is improbable.⁵

The occasion of these tensions is related primarily to the “textual, hermeneutical, exegetical, and theological problems raised by the use of Hab 2:4 in the New Testament.”⁶ A corollary to this central concern is the alleged Paul/James antithesis between faith and works. However, when all the scriptural data is synthesized, the arguments are found to be complementary, and a biblically balanced approach emerges.⁷

A larger, concentric corollary involves the scriptural data which may be systematized within the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. Larger yet is the concentric corollary of divine sovereignty and human responsibility. In all of these cases and from the reference point of an exegetical, systematic theology, the issues are not illuminated by an either/or methodology but by a both/and sensitivity. The key word of biblical and systematic studies in theology must be “balance.”

INTERNAL CHALLENGES

It is expedient to examine the text of Hab 2:4b first. There are at least two good reasons for this tack: textual variants are minimal, and consequently, the line becomes a poetical reference point which provides important clues concerning the interpretation of the more difficult lines within the immediate context.⁸

*Textual considerations*⁹

The major textual problem concerns the third masculine singular suffix attached to נָמָן. Brownlee summarizes the pertinent data:

⁵Concerning a tangentially *but yet vitally related* discussion on the significance of the genitive θεοῦ in the phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ within its context (i.e., Rom 1:17a; cf. Hab 2:4b quotation in Rom 1:17b), Cranfield honestly concludes that “*the last word in this debate has clearly not yet been spoken. It would therefore be irresponsible to claim that the question has been conclusively decided either way*” [italics added]. C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), 1. 98-99. The extended discussion of this problem by Cranfield represents only one facet of the tension related to the present study.

⁶Johnson, “The Gospel That Paul Preached,” 338, n. 31.

⁷Cranfield carefully describes the Protestant/Catholic tensions over δικαιοῦν. His recognition of both distinction and concord with regard to justification and sanctification is noteworthy. Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 95.

⁸In the light of the textual complications of vv 2:4a and 2:5a, the latter reason is particularly significant. Cf. D. E. Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1976) 45; C. F. Keil, *Minor Prophets*, in vol. 10 of *Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes*, by C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.), 2. 73; E. Henderson, *The Book of the Twelve Minor Prophets* (London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co., 1845) 303.

⁹For extended discussions, see: W. H. Brownlee, “The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk,” *JBL* 82 (1963) 322ff.; J. A. Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic

בָּאמוֹנָתְךָ Instead of בָּאמוֹנָתֶךָ in Hab. 2:4, G, Aq., and Old Latin read. It is no loss that the word in vii. 15 [i.e. 1QpHab] is no longer extant, for in the script of the scroll 1 and ' could not have been distinguished. The interpretation אַמְנוֹתָם ("their faith") at viii. 2, however, fortunately confirms the 3rd per. suffix. T's קִוְשְׁתָהָן interprets also the 3rd sing. suffix — the plural number being merely a part of the translator's free representation of the thought. The Palestinian recension reads εν πιστ[ε]ι αυτου with MT against G's εκ πίστεως μου In the N.T. neither suffix is attested (Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38), but the interpretation is consonant with the 3rd pers.¹⁰

Semantic considerations pertaining to צדיק¹¹

1. *General considerations.* With the introduction of the semantics of the צדיק words, the battle for balance in this study commences. To a greater or lesser degree, every scholar's presuppositions color his interpretation of the data. Generally speaking, Hill's treatment demonstrates commendable balance. Dodd's treatment is based upon a legitimate footing; however, at times, he becomes eccentric to the right. His footing is worthy of citation:

It is evident that this study of the Greek renderings of צדיק has an important bearing upon the uses of δικαιοσύνη, δικαιος, δικαιοῦν in the New Testament. In particular, the Pauline use of these terms must be understood in the light of Septuagintal usage and the underlying Hebrew. The apostle wrote Greek, and read the LXX, but he was also familiar with the Hebrew original. Thus while his language largely follows that of the LXX, the Greek words are for him always coloured by their Hebrew association.¹²

Problems of Habakkuk II. 4-5," *JTS* 28 (1977) 10ff. [note pp. 17-18 for further bibliography]; P. J. M. Southwell, "A Note on Habakkuk ii. 4," *JTS* 19 (1968) 614-16 [a good synopsis of the data with the texts conveniently printed]; F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, trans. by T. L. Kingsbury (2 vols., reprinted; Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978), 2. 198-99; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964) 272-73 and nn. 195, 196. In n. 196, Bruce outlines the various ways that the LXX witnesses position the possessive μου with δικαιος. Ibid., 273, n. 196.

¹⁰W. H. Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran* (JBLMS 11; Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1959) 44-45. Concerning the μου of the LXX, it "could mean either 'because of my [sc. God's] faithfulness' or 'because of his faith in me.'" Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 100. It is obvious that the active and passive options of πίστις contribute to this ambivalence. For further comment on the diversity of the possessive pronouns in Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, see: J. Eadie, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869) 244.

¹¹For an excellent discussion of the root צדיק, with generally credible syntheses, see: D. Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings: Studies in the Semantics of Soteriological Terms* (SNTSMS 5; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1967) 82-162 [i.e., chap. 4, "The Background and Meaning of ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ and Cognate Words"]; note especially pp. 82-98.

¹²C. H. Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1935) 57.

It will be seen that Barr's slightly left-of-center polemic will help to check indiscriminate extensions of the aforementioned principle, regardless of the specific words involved (e.g., קָדֵשׁ, צָדִיק, אַמְנָה, etc.).

After an etymological survey of the root קָדֵשׁ (cf. Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Arabic),¹³ Hill concludes:

On the basis of these illustrations of early usage it is difficult to assert with confidence a single primary meaning of the root קָדֵשׁ. The most we can say is that they suggest that the fundamental idea of קָדֵשׁ available to us is that of conformity to a norm which requires to be defined in each particular case.¹⁴

Turning to the Old Testament, it is first necessary to note that there is a "two-fold application of the קָדֵשׁ-terms"¹⁵: "The application of קָדֵשׁ-words to Yahweh" and "the application of the קָדֵשׁ-words to Israel and to the individual."¹⁶

Cranfield's survey adequately presents the most significant data and exposes the judicial and ethical subcategories:

Where *sedek* is used in connexion with the conduct of persons, it refers to the fulfillment of the obligations arising from a particular situation, the demands of a particular relationship. As far as Israel was concerned the supremely important relationship was the covenant between God and His people; and *saddik* in the OT is to be understood in the context of the Covenant. The adjective *saddik* is used to describe those whose conduct and character, whether specifically in relation to the administration of justice or quite generally, are characterized by *sedek*. But [italics added] there are passages in which *saddik* used of Israel or of the individual Israelite, refers to status rather than to ethical condition (see, for example, Ps. 32:11 in the light of vv. 1, 2 and 5; Isa. 60:21). The cognate verb used in the Qal, can mean (i) "be just," "be righteous" (e.g. Job 35:7; Ps. 19:9 [MT:10]; 51:4 [MT:6]); (ii) "be in the right" in the sense of having a just cause (e.g. Gen. 38:26); (iii) "be justified," "be declared righteous" (e.g. Ps. 143:2; Isa. 43:26). In the Hiph'il (and occasionally in the Pi'el), it means "justify," "declare righteous," "acquit" (e.g. Exod. 23:7; Deut. 25:1; Prov. 17:15): there is also one place (Dan. 12:3), where the Hiph'il seems to mean "make righteous," "turn to righteousness."¹⁷

¹³Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 82-83.

¹⁴Ibid. Cf. Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 94.

¹⁵Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 86-96. This data should be carefully surveyed. For treatments of a popular nature, see: A. B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament*, ed. by S. D. F. Salmond (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907) 264-82; R. B. Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Erdmans, 1973) 158ff.; L. J. Kuyper, "Righteousness and Salvation," *SJT* 30 (1977) 233-52.

¹⁶Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 86-92 and 93-96.

¹⁷Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 94.

The existence of an ethical sense in some occurrences of צִדְיק in the Old Testament must not be disputed: “On many occasions . . . the ‘righteous’ are those who, in humility and faithfulness, trust in Yahweh, despite persecution and oppression: those who seek to live uprightly and without pride of heart, depending on Yahweh for protection and vindication.”¹⁸ However, the question remains whether it is valid to categorize צִדְיק in Hab 2:4b as “*just, righteous*, in conduct and character . . . towards God.”¹⁹

2. צִדְקָה in *Genesis 15:6*. As previously intimated, the judicial implications concerning the nature of any man who is designated צִדְיק are not always given due credence. To Habakkuk or any godly Jew, the background of God’s dealings with Abraham would be foundational: “Then he [i.e., Abraham] believed [וַיַּאֲמַן] in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness [לֹא צִדְקָה לוֹ צִדְקָה]” (Gen 15:6).²⁰ Of particular significance to this study is the observation that the roots of the two key words of Hab 2:4b (i.e., צִדְיק and אֶמְוֹנָה) are associated in this important verse from the Pentateuch. Also related to this judicial phenomenon is the delocutive employment of the Hiphil of קָרַא (i.e., to “pronounce in the right,” “justify”).²¹ These observations are germane to a balanced understanding of צִדְיק (and אֶמְוֹנָה) in Hab 2:4b.

Gowan believes that the term has a judicial nuance, based upon the occurrence of צִדְיק in antithetical contexts: “The word . . . is used in a situation of controversy and contrast, to denote those whom God favors.”²² This argument does favor a non-ethical employment of צִדְיק in Hab 2:4b, but it presents a slightly different perspective, one which cannot be ignored in the light of the larger context:

¹⁸Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 94. Hill’s discussion of the ethical usages of קִידּוּשׁ is excellent. He points out that such usages are inextricably related to the attributes of the Lord associated with the קִידּוּשׁ-group of words [cf. the same phenomenon in reference to the מְנֻנָּה-group] (*ibid.*, 92). Furthermore, “the suggested threefold development in the history of the קִידּוּשׁ-words may be of guidance in the understanding and interpretation of other religious and theological terms. This development takes the word from an association with man and his life (in this case, the ‘righteousness’ of the king) to an association with Yahweh, and back again to man, with a richer content and colour drawn from its relation to deity” (*ibid.*, 97).

¹⁹BDB 843. For an extended development of this ethical category, see: Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 42ff.

²⁰For an important discussion of Hab 2:4 as it presupposes the foundational truths of God’s dealings with Abraham (e.g., Gen 15:6) along with Paul’s “Christian Midrash,” see: E. E. Ellis, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957) 117, n. 1; 119-20. Cf. W. B. Wallis, “The Translation of Romans 1:17—A Basic Motif in Paulinism,” *JETS* 16 (1973) 22.

²¹R. J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax: An Outline* (2nd edition; Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto, 1976) 28.

²²Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 42. It is fair to assume, however, that Gowan’s thesis and conclusion concerning צִדְיק in Hab 2:4b have been affected to a degree by his desire to demonstrate an antithetical substantive in עֲבָלָה (2:4a). *Ibid.*

The *just* (Hebrew, *tsaddik*), the righteous one, is the one who has been vindicated, whom God has declared to be right. There is a legal background to this word; it denotes the winner in a case at law in some of its Old Testament uses. So it is not restricted in its reference to a purely internal quality of goodness which one may possess. It is used in situations of controversy to denote the side which is right. Its opposite is wicked (Hebrew, *rasha^c*), and we saw the two words paired in 1:4 and 1:13 [italics added].²³

3. *The Greek renderings.*²⁴ An important generalization is noted by Dodd:

Where the Hebrew conception of righteousness differs from the popular Greek conception we may put it thus, that whereas for the Greek δίκαιοσύνη is always being pulled over from the broad sense of "righteousness" to the narrower sense of "justice," the pull in Hebrew is in the opposite direction.²⁵

In the light of this, it is obvious that the Septuagint's renderings of the פָּרָשׁ-words modified the δίκαιος words. These changes primarily reflect divine and covenantal influences found in the Hebrew word. NT usages basically follow this pattern:

That Paul's use of the words δίκαιος, δικαιοσύνη and δικαιοῦν (and also of δικαίωμα and δικαίωσις) reflects his familiarity with, and is to a very considerable extent molded by, the LXX use of them to render words of the *sdk* group is clear, and is generally agreed. . . . But, in spite of the general agreement on the importance of the LXX here, there is far from being general agreement as to the precise significance which these words have in Paul.²⁶

Ironically, it would seem that these observations and clarifications magnify the interpretive challenges relating to Hab 2:4b.

Semantic considerations pertaining to הַיְלֵד?

This kind of life must be understood within its biblical framework:

To *live* is not merely to exist, in Hebrew thought. One is not really alive when sick, weak, in danger or with a damaged reputation. To be alive is to have vigor, security and honor. So this verse does not merely tell us how we can barely hang on to some feeble thread of existence in

²³Ibid., 41.

²⁴See: Hill, "δίκαιος and Related Words in Greek Usage," in *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 98ff.

²⁵Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 45. For specific comparisons and contrasts, see: Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 102-3.

²⁶Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 95. Concerning the verb (i.e., δικαιοῦν), he especially notes that "none of the occurrences . . . can be at all tolerably explained on the basis of the word's use in secular Greek." Ibid.

times such as Habakkuk describes; no, it speaks of being richly and fully alive. That interpretation is confirmed by 3:17-18.²⁷

Hill corroborates this interpretation, but with an ethical emphasis:

Man's life, however, is more than simply length of days and abundance of possessions: it consists rather in what he is by virtue of his goals and ideals. . . . The pessimistic outlook which characterizes Ecclesiastes focuses attention on enjoyment, but in Proverbs the ideal is the good life, the life of righteousness. "In the paths of righteousness is life" (Prov. 12:28; cf. 11:19; 10:16); wisdom is the source and means of life (3:2; 8:35), and the fear of the Lord leads to life (19:23). . . . We recall the utterance of Deut. 8:3, "Man lives (*בַּחֲיָה*) by everything which proceeds from the mouth of the Lord" . . . Only by faithfulness, that is, by loyalty to Yahweh and his covenant, will the righteous man live (Hab. 2:4). In these instances the verb *בִּחְיָה* connotes not only physical survival in a time of disaster, but also living in right relation to God.²⁸

Ethical responsibilities, however, must not be used to distort the ultimate, theocentric foundation of biblical life. The most significant aspect of the Hebrew understanding of "life," is "its dependence on God."²⁹ Consequently, it is appropriate to classify the *בַּחֲיָה* of Hab 2:4b under the heading of the "pregnant sense of fulness of life in divine favour."³⁰

בָּאָמֹנוֹת

The significance of *אָמֹנוֹת* in Hab 2:4b and in its mediate connection (i.e., through the Greek rendering *πίστις*) to the NT references supersedes all the other hermeneutical challenges of this investigation.

1. *The usage of אָמֹנוֹת*.³¹ The feminine noun *אָמֹנוֹת* in the OT primarily connotes "firmness, steadfastness, fidelity."³² Of particular

²⁷Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 42-43. Cf. H. S. Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4" (unpublished Bachelor of Divinity thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1966) 27-29, 34-36. Against this reference being merely an eschatological one, see: R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1936) 87-88. Cranfield combines the abundant and eschatological life perspectives: Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 101.

²⁸Hill, *Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings*, 165.

²⁹Ibid., 168.

³⁰BDB 311.

³¹See esp.: "'Faith' and 'Truth' — an Examination of some Linguistic Arguments," chap. 7 of: J. Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University, 1961) 161-205. Also: ibid., 161, n. 1; and A. Jepsen, "בָּאָמֹנוֹת," *TDOT* 1. 292ff.

³²BDB 53. For a helpful survey in chart form listing every occurrence, the KJV rendering, point of reference, and meaning, see: Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4," 20-24.

significance is the employment of the word in the sense of “faithfulness.”³³ When referring to God, this usage reflects a divine attribute often paralleled with his רֹאשׁ or his קָדוֹשׁ (cf. Pss 88:12; 89:2, 3, 6, 9, 25; 96:13; 98:3; 119:90; 143:1; Isa 25:1; Hos 2:22 [all versifications from Hebrew Bible]). The word has a passive meaning in the overwhelming number of cases; note the following excerpts from Lightfoot’s research:

It will thus be seen that אֶמְנוּנָה properly represents the passive sense of πίστις, as indeed the form of the word shows. . . . Thus in its biblical usage the word אֶמְנוּנָה can scarcely be said ever to have the sense “belief, trust,” though sometimes approaching towards it. . . . Unlike the Hebrew, the Greek word seems to have started from the active meaning. . . . In the Old Testament, there being no Hebrew equivalent to the active meaning, πίστις has always the passive sense, “fidelity,” “constancy,” unless the passage in Habakkuk be regarded as an exception.³⁴

Thus, there would be no debate regarding the significance of אֶמְנוּנָה in Hab 2:4b if its usage was determined by statistical precedent. For this reason, many would conclude that “*emunah* seems . . . to emphasize one’s own inner attitude and the conduct it produces”³⁵ and that its significance is “constancy in executing and fulfilling the commands of God through all uncertainty and conflict.”³⁶ Nevertheless, the usage of אֶמְנוּנָה in Hab 2:4b could be regarded as transitional and consequently could be construed to bear a double sense (i.e., both active and passive).³⁷ In the light of this possibility, further pursuits are necessary.

2. *The theoretical root* [עֲמַנָּה]. After a survey of the cognates of עֲמַנָּה (e.g., Arabic, Ethiopic, South Arabic, Syriac, etc.),³⁸ one might be led to conclude unreservedly that “the basic idea underlying the root is that of firmness or fixity”³⁹ and that:

³³Ibid.; cf. usage category 3. Also, see usage category 4 in: KB 1. 60.

³⁴J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957) 155, 156. Lightfoot’s whole excursus, “The words denoting ‘Faith,’” should be studied; it is a valuable synopsis (*ibid.*, 154-58).

³⁵Jepsen, *TDOT* I. 317.

³⁶G. Quell and G. Schrenk, “δίκη, δίκαιος, δικαιοσύνη, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 2. 177. Cf.: “The idea [in Hab 2:4b] is that of unwavering hold of the word of God against all contrary appearances” (O. Michel, “πίστις,” *NIDNTT* 1. 597).

³⁷Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 155. The contention that the usage of אֶמְנוּנָה in Hab 2:4b is transitional and that it actually attains to an active meaning is actively supported and delineated by Barr: *Semantics*, 201.

³⁸Cf. Barr, *Semantics*, 185-86.

³⁹Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 66. Dodd, along with others, would also argue that “the Greek translators show themselves aware of this by occasionally translating

When a Hebrew heard the various words derived from the root *ם-מ-נ*, the basic idea that came to his mind was apparently “constancy.” When they were used of things, they meant “continual”; and when they were connected with persons, “reliability.”⁴⁰

Nevertheless, Jepsen interjects a crucial qualification: “However, derivatives could have special meanings in any given context.”⁴¹ This qualification is the polemical standard of Barr:

Even assuming, therefore, that the “ultimate” etymology of words of the root *ם-m-n* is “firmness,” we have here an illustration of the harm of paying excessive attention to the most ultimate etymology and failing to consider what forms were current at the relevant times and what senses they bore in actual usage. Extant forms are not derived directly from the ultimate etymology or from the “root meaning.” There is a detailed and often complicated history for each form; the fact that for lack of knowledge we often cannot trace it does not mean that we can suppose it does not exist.⁴²

The significance of Barr’s statement is more clearly seen if it is remembered that the Qal perfect of **מָנַךְ** is not attested in biblical Hebrew.

Built upon the above semantic hypothesis is Barr’s suggestion that historically there are really two spheres of the evolution of the usage of **מָנַךְ**.⁴³ The discussion of this debate will be restricted to the biblical data. Dodd’s introductory comments are germane:

In the vocabulary of religion and ethics the verb is chiefly used (i) in the *niphal* participle, which bears the passive meaning “made firm,” “confirmed,” “established,” and so “trustworthy,” “faithful”; and (ii) in the *hiphil*, which means “to be convinced,” “to trust.”⁴⁴

On one side are those who would historically relate the usage of **מָנַךְ** exclusively to the Niphal verbal. Many would argue that in the absence of corresponding substantives for the Hiphil’s active sense

the words from this root by such expressions as στηρίζειν, στήριγμα” (*ibid.*). However, Barr registers some legitimate objections to such arguments. Cf. Barr, *Semantics*, 166-71.

⁴⁰Jepsen, *TDOT* 1, 322-23.

⁴¹Ibid., 323.

⁴²Barr, *Semantics*, 187. For Barr’s polemic against the “fundamental meaning” syndrome which leads to the “root fallacy” complication in relation to **מָנַךְ**, see: *ibid.*, 161ff. He argues against “an illegitimate confusion of theological and linguistic methods” (163). His argument is well taken; however, theological presuppositions are never totally set aside, as illustrated sporadically within his own discussion.

⁴³See his argument: *ibid.*, 186-87.

⁴⁴Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 66.

(cf. Aramaic אֶמְנָה, “faith”),” “the substantives אֶמְנָה represent the sense of the *niphal*, ‘steadfastness,’ ‘trustworthiness,’ ‘faithfulness’”⁴⁵ Therefore, אֶמְנָה would be taken to denote “*trustworthiness*, the frame of mind which can be relied upon.”⁴⁶

On the other side are those who would emphasize an overriding relationship of אֶמְנָה to אֶמְנֵין. Barr argues that “. . . the whole structure built upon the supposed ‘fundamental meaning’ of the root collapses as soon as real attention is given to the verb *he’emin* ‘believe’”⁴⁷ This relationship (i.e., of אֶמְנָה to אֶמְנֵין) is developed to support an active sense for the substantive (i.e., אֶמְנָה = “*trustfulness*, the frame of mind which relies on another”⁴⁸). Vitally related to this argument is the discussion of the function of the Hiphil of אֶמְנֵין. This is adequately attended by Barr, who opts for an “internal-transitive” function as opposed to a “declarative-estimative” function.⁴⁹

Up to this point, the examination of this semantic debate has not been complicated by mediating positions; however, there are many who rightly contend that construing אֶמְנָה as exclusively passive or as exclusively active upsets a fine biblical balance. For this reason, a mediating position is undoubtedly the preferable way of striving for theological harmony of all the scriptural data. Unfortunately, there are varieties of mediating positions which multiply the complexity of this pursuit for balance. At least two major varieties are worthy of mention. For convenience, they might be labeled lexical (i.e., the word אֶמְנָה as it relates to *both* its active and passive historical spheres) and contextual (i.e., the *context* of אֶמְנָה in Hab 2:4b, especially the relationship of צַדִּיק in its largest context). Presuppositions are also obvious in these mediating positions; however, as previously intimated, this is unavoidable. Consequently, a continuous evaluation of one’s presuppositions is mandatory in order to determine whether they are valid or invalid as measured by the theological totality of revelation.

Eadie’s generalization concerning the אֶמְנָה of man serves as a fitting introduction to a mediating position: “The idea of steadfastness expressed by the Hebrew noun implies faith.”⁵⁰ An essentially

⁴⁵Ibid., 68. Cf. ibid. 59ff.; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 155; and, Barr, *Semantics*, 173, 198, 201-5.

⁴⁶Lightfoot’s delineation of the passive sense: *Galatians*, 154.

⁴⁷Barr, *Semantics*, 164. For some pertinent observations on πιστεύειν with the dative paralleling בְּאֶמְנֵין בְּ, see: Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 66-68.

⁴⁸Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 154.

⁴⁹Barr, *Semantics*, 176ff. His argument corroborates his earlier assertion that “the subject of the verb *he’emin* is frequently or normally a man” (ibid., 164).

⁵⁰Eadie, *Galatians*, 244.

credible argument for a balanced conception of אָמֹנוּהָ may be noted in Keil's presentation:

אָמֹנוּהָ does not denote "an honourable character, or fidelity to conviction" (Hitzig), but . . . firmness (Ex. xvii. 12); then, as an attribute of God, trustworthiness, unchangeable fidelity in the fulfillment of His promises (Deut. xxxii. 4; Ps. xxxiii. 4, lxxxix. 34); and, as a personal attribute of man, fidelity in word and deed (Jer. vii. 28, ix. 2; Ps. xxxvii. 3); and, in his relation to God, firm attachment to God, an undisturbed confidence in the divine promises of grace, *firma fiducia* and *fides*, so that in ²ēmūnâh the primary meanings of *ne²emân* and *he²emîn* are combined. This is also apparent from the fact that Abraham is called *ne²emân* in Neh. ix. 8, with reference to the fact that it is affirmed of him in Gen. xv. 6 that הִאמְנָה בַּיהוָה, "he trusted, or believed, the Lord;" and still more indisputably from the passage before us, since it is impossible to mistake the reference in צַדִּיק בְּאֶמְנוֹתָיו יְחִיָּה to Gen. xv. 6, "he believed (*he²emîn*) in Jehovah, and He reckoned it to him *litsēdâqâh*."⁵¹

It is obvious that a balanced conception of אָמֹנוּהָ in Hab 2:4b will avoid the error of taking the words to mean that one is justified by character. It will also avoid synergistic conceptions of the non-biblical variety.⁵² At the same time, אָמֹנוּהָ may be conceived of as a "fruit of faith": "faithful faith" or "steadfast trust."⁵³ Bryant, after discussing the active and passive options for אָמֹנוּהָ and leaning towards an emphasis upon the former, concludes:

It must be carefully maintained that neither the Old nor the New Testament separate faith from its fruits of faithfulness. The distinction between faith and faithfulness is somewhat artificial, for . . . in the long

⁵¹Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 73. "And in addition to this, ²ēmūnâh is opposed to the pride of the Chaldaean, to his exaltation of himself above God; and for that very reason it cannot denote integrity in itself, but simply some quality which has for its leading feature humble submission to God, that is to say, faith, or firm reliance upon God" (ibid., 74). For more discussion on the theocentric footing of an anthropological manifestation of fidelity, see: C. von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom*, trans. by J. S. Banks (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1885) 325-27; Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2. 200; and J. B. Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962) 314. For corroborations of a mediating position in general, see: Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 119-20; Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 340, n. 31; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 154ff.

⁵²A good illustration would be the DSS pesher of Hab 2:4b. For discussion, see: G. Bertram, "συνεργός, συνεργέω," *TDNT* 7. 873.

⁵³Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4," 32, 41, 62. Cf. von Orelli's "believing fidelity" (i.e., a trusting faithfulness based upon God's fidelity; C. von Orelli, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, trans. by J. S. Banks [reprinted; Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1977] 248).

run they are the same thing. The Bible knows nothing of a true faith which does not hold fast its confidence to the end.⁵⁴

Syntactical considerations

The preposition בְּ attached to אָמֹנָה is obviously instrumental. Von Orelli suggests that the “בְּ introduces the efficient medium of the preservation of life, as in Ezek. xviii. 22.”⁵⁵ Also, the whole phrase (i.e., בְּאָמֹנוֹתֶךָ יִחַיָּה וְצַדִּיק) should be taken with يִחַיָּה, not with צַדִּיק.⁵⁶

EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

The larger context

The book. An awareness of the destructive attempts to transpose major sections of chaps. 1 and 2 of Habakkuk enables the interpreter to identify eccentric contextual associations relating to Hab 2:4b.⁵⁷ The traditional order of the text of the first two chapters constitutes the larger context:

The text, as it now stands, permits a perfectly natural development of the prophet's thought; in reality, the development becomes more vivid, for instead of one problem that perplexes the prophet we have two, and instead of one divine reply we have two. Surely there is nothing impossible or improbable in this. . . . On the whole, the . . . interpretation, which requires no omissions or transpositions, seems to satisfy most completely the facts in the case.⁵⁸

⁵⁴Ibid., 49; cf. 44-49. Michel concurs: “To sum up, it may be said that *he’emîn* and *’emûnâh* describe a living act of trust in the OT, and also the dimension of human existence in a historical situation” (Michel, “πίστις,” 597). Cf. W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 2, 285. Herein it would be profitable to compare the evidence from Gen 15:6/Rom 4:3 and Gen 22:1-19/Jas 2:14-24; etc.

⁵⁵Von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom*, 325, n. 2.

⁵⁶Cf. Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2, 73; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1937) 143-44; and the forthcoming discussion of ἐκ πίστεως in Rom 1:17.

⁵⁷For discussions of the major critical conjectures, see: A. Jeffers, “A Commentary on the Book of Habakkuk” (unpublished Master of Theology thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1960) 14-17; C. L. Taylor, Jr., “Introduction and Exegesis of the Book of Habakkuk,” in *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. by G. A. Buttrick, et al. (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 6, 975-77; G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906), 2, 115ff.; F. T. Kelly, “The Strophic Structure of Habakkuk,” *AJSL* 18 (1901-2) 94ff.; R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 932-37.

⁵⁸F. C. Eiselen, *The Minor Prophets* (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1907) 467-68. Refutations of transpositions based upon elaborate chiastic fabrications are neither

The “placarded revelation”⁵⁹

In Hab 2:2-3, the prophet is given instructions which clearly suggest the priority of this בְּזִוֵּן (v 2). These verses “form the introduction to the Word of God, which the prophet receives in reply to his cry of lamentation addressed to the Lord in ch. i.12-17.”⁶⁰ Though Keil would include v 1 of chap 2 in this introduction, it is better to regard Hab 2:1 as transitional. It is the climactic summons of the prophet’s second lament (i.e., 1:12-2:1).

Verse 2 is particularly significant: “Then the LORD answered me and said, ‘Write down [כְתֹב] the vision and make it plain upon the tablets [עַל־הַלְוחֹת] in order that one who reads it may run.’” Interestingly, Holt paraphrases the last part of v 2: “‘so he who reads it may live obediently.’”⁶¹ He, of course, is taking זָרֶן metaphorically (cf. metaphorical לְלִפְנֵי; cf. also זִיר in Ps 119:32, and the running metaphors of the NT, e.g., 1 Cor 9:24-27, Phil 3:13-14, etc.). This view is at least worthy of some consideration in the light of the ethically climactic context. הַלְוחֹת generates most of the discussion which ultimately pertains to Hab 2:4b. It has been suggested that the article implies particular tablets which were displayed publicly;⁶² however, this is an unnecessary conjecture.⁶³ “The article . . . may only designate the tablets which were to be employed for the purpose. It may merely indicate these as definite in the mind of the speaker.”⁶⁴

The plural termination has been employed to substantiate a larger scope (cf. below) for this “placarded revelation.”⁶⁵ But, the

desirable nor credible. Cf. H. H. Walker and N. W. Lund, “The Literary Structure of the Book of Habakkuk,” *JBL* 53 (1934) 360. For outlines and discussions of the traditional order, see: Eiselen, *The Minor Prophets*, 464-65; von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of God’s Kingdom*, 323-24; and Hendriksen’s contextual paraphrase: Hendriksen, *Exposition of Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968) 127-28.

⁵⁹I.e., Brownlee’s appropriate terminology pertaining to this contextual challenge: Brownlee, “The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk,” 319.

⁶⁰Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 67-68.

⁶¹J. M. Holt, “So He May Run Who Reads It,” *JBL* 83 (1964) 301. For a presentation of the traditional interpretations of the words involving facility in the communication and/or dissemination of this vision, see: Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 301.

⁶²E.g., T. Laetsch, *Bible Commentary: The Minor Prophets* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1956) 330; cf. Ewald’s view as delineated in Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 301.

⁶³Cf. P. Kleinert, “Habakkuk” in *Minor Prophets*, trans. by C. Elliott, in *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, ed. by J. P. Lange (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n.d.) 22.

⁶⁴Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 301.

⁶⁵Kleinert so argues: “The reason that several tablets are mentioned here, and not one, as in Isaiah [8:1], is found in the rich and various contents of the five-fold woe” (Kleinert, “Habakkuk,” 22).

plural could also be explained in the following manner: "The 'tablets' or 'plaques' represent multiple copies, each of which is to be set up in a prominent place."⁶⁶ It is no wonder that Laetsch admits that "just how long the inscription to be written by Habakkuk was is hard to tell."⁶⁷ Nevertheless, a survey of the pertinent syntactical data and the major positions is required.

1. *Its scope.* Five separate viewpoints concerning the length of the inscription can be distinguished; two view it as short, and three as long. The two "short" views are summarized adequately by Brownlee:

Scholars who look for a brief text as the placarded revelation of Habakkuk usually restrict it to 2:4, interpreting 2:5-6a as an introduction to a taunt song over the fall of Babylon. However, J.M.P. Smith in *An American Translation* links vss. 4-5 together in a separate paragraph, and the RSV has followed suit. The argument for including these two verses is that the particles *we²af kî* at the beginning of vs. 5 are conjunctive.⁶⁸

The **וְאַתָּה** is syntactically important. This fact must be recognized regardless of the problem involved. It is suggested that the either/or option might be sensibly replaced by a both/and perspective in reference to the development of the argument. It seems best to take the binder as "and furthermore,"⁶⁹ or "moreover, in addition."⁷⁰ Emerton's suggestion will be accepted: "The words *we²ap ki*, with which verse 5 begins, link it to verse 4 and suggest that it is part of God's answer to the prophet . . ."⁷¹ Consequently, v 4 can be understood as the crucial lesson of God's disclosure which was to be recorded (i.e., the unrighteous one's essence is perverted), and vv 5ff.

⁶⁶Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 321. On the parenthetical data of v 3, see: W. H. Brownlee, "The Composition of Habakkuk," in *Hommages à André Dupont-Sommer* (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1971) 264. For eschatological remarks which should be reviewed guardedly, see: F. Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2, 198-99. For a profitable discussion of the exegetical data of v 3, see: Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 301-2.

⁶⁷Laetsch, *Minor Prophets*, 330. Cf. Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 319.

⁶⁸Brownlee, "The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk," 321 (Brownlee offers a commendable survey of the data and issues: *ibid.*, 319-25). Cf. Lehrman's option for vv 4-5: Lehrman, "Habakkuk," 219. Also, von Orelli (for v 4): von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom*, 323-24, 327.

⁶⁹BDB 65.

⁷⁰Laetsch, *Minor Prophets*, 332. Cf. his discussion: *ibid.*, 331-32. For an expanded treatment of the syntactical possibilities (including a potential correlation with the **וְאַתָּה** of v 4), see: Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic Problem of Habakkuk II.4-5," 1-2, 4-5. Cf. Brownlee, "The Composition of Habakkuk," 265, n. 2.

⁷¹Emerton, "The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5," 1.

could be conceived of as the consequent lesson (i.e., the unrighteous one's actions are perverted).

Only one of the three major suggestions for a longer scope is worthy of development. The other two, the “vision” to be recorded refers to the revelation of 1:5-11, and the חַזְׁוֹן should be taken literally as a reference to the theophany of chap. 3, are surveyed by Brownlee. They are not viable options.⁷² The viable suggestion pertains to the נִשְׁרָאָן clause commencing at v 2:5b. This binder suggests that the divine disclosure to be recorded is not to be restricted exclusively to the contents of Hab 2:4-5a. Keil notes that “the allusion to the Chaldaean is evident from the relative clause which follows, and which Delitzsch very properly calls an individualizing exegesis to גָּבָר יְהִיר.”⁷³

Prior to a contextual summary, it must be noted that there is also a piece of logical syntax which continues this interwoven disclosure; the obvious antecedent of בָּלָם (v 6) is אֱלֹהֶיךָ, who are the objects of the oppressor’s tyranny.⁷⁴ Based upon the above observations, it is most likely that the “placarded revelation” extends beyond the disclosure of v 4. It is suggested, therefore, that v 4 be considered the primary “general principle to be applied in a particular case as here with the ungodly Chaldeans.”⁷⁵ (The revelation of Hab 2:5a could be viewed as a secondary or supplemental maxim.)

The immediate context

“The immediate context of vs. 4b (i.e., vss. 4a and 5a),” Gowan concedes, “is about as difficult as any part of the Old Testament to understand.”⁷⁶ Three major problems are usually cited. First, it is often assumed that there is a “lost subject”⁷⁷ in Hab 2:4a. As an example, Taylor argues that “a noun form is expected as a counterpart to *righteous*, which occurs in the second half of the verse; ‘the wicked’ would be normal and is found in the Aramaic paraphrase

⁷²See: Brownlee, “The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk,” 319-21.

⁷³Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 75; cf. 2. 71. Cf.: Brownlee, “The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk,” 321 (however, see: Brownlee, “The Composition of Habakkuk,” 265). On the discussion of נִשְׁרָאָן introducing an independent relative clause, see: GKC 445-46.

⁷⁴Cf. Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 3.

⁷⁵Bryant, “The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4,” 59-60. Cf. von Orelli’s “mashal-like principle” (*The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God’s Kingdom*, 327) and Brownlee’s “aphorism” (“The Composition of Habakkuk,” 265). For further discussion on these general principles and their application to the nearest historical reference point (i.e., Babylon), see: Kleinert, “Habakkuk,” 22, 24.

⁷⁶Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 44.

⁷⁷Brownlee, “The Composition of Habakkuk,” 265.

(Targ.).⁷⁸ Second, it is also argued that a leading verb in the same line is missing (i.e., one parallel to the הַיְהּ of 2:4b).⁷⁹ Finally, it is alleged that the reference to “wine” in Hab 2:5a is incongruous; Gowan facetiously brings this out when he comments:

In the RSV, “but the righteous shall live by his faith,” is followed by, “Moreover, wine is treacherous,” and somehow that doesn’t seem the place for a temperance lesson. This is a really frustrating passage for an exegete, for it seems that now we have come to the pivotal point of the book, and we’re not sure what verse 5a means!⁸⁰

Habakkuk 2:4a. Southwell looks for the ““missing subject” in הַנָּה; he conjectures that it should be revocalized הַנָּה from the root נָהַ, rendering it “the eminent man.”⁸¹ However, it is best to understand הַנָּה in its normal sense as an interjection: “behold!”⁸² It is usually an “interrupting call for attention.”⁸³

עֲפָלָה presents a seemingly impossible challenge of decipherment. A broad perspective on the problems involved is gained by Keil’s general comment: “The early translators and commentators have taken this hemistich differently. They divide it into protasis and apodosis, and take עֲפָלָה either as the predicate or as the subject.”⁸⁴ Emerton’s synopsis of the factors contributing to the complication is adequate:

The difficulty is to determine the meaning of the obscure word *‘uppēlāh*, and to find the right way of construing it with the other words in this part of the verse. The word appears to be the third person feminine singular perfect *pu^cal* of *‘pl*. B.D.B. distinguishes between two different roots *‘pl*. To root I belong the noun *‘ōpālīm*, “hemorrhoids,” and also the place Ophel, to which B.D.B. ascribes the meaning “mound, hill.” The Arabic noun *‘afalun*, “tumour,” is compared, and it is suggested that the meaning of the Hebrew verb is “swell.” The

⁷⁸Taylor, “Introduction and Exegesis of the Book of Habakkuk,” 988-89. However, some would argue that such a subject (viz., the Chaldean) is “inferred.” Cf. Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 72.

⁷⁹For conjectures which are tailored to fit this assumption, see Emerton’s survey: Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 15-16.

⁸⁰Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 44.

⁸¹Southwell, “A Note on Habakkuk ii.4,” 616-17. He deletes לֹא־יִשְׁרָה on metrical grounds. For an outline of his position with challenges of its weaknesses, see: Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 13-14.

⁸²Cf. the Ugaritic *hn* II (*UT* 391) and the Akkadian *annuma*, “now” (*KB* 238).

⁸³KB 238-39; BDB 243-44. Cf. Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 11. The possibility of a syntactical correlation with the בְּ of v 5 has previously been mentioned as a possible option; however, more evidence is desirable. Cf. Brownlee, “The Composition of Habakkuk,” 265.

⁸⁴Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 72.

only place where the verb occurs in the Hebrew Bible is Hab. ii.4, and B.D.B. expresses doubt about the correctness of the text. Root II occurs in Num. xiv.44 . . . B.D.B. thinks that the verb there perhaps means “be heedless,” and compares Arabic *gafala*, “be heedless, neglectful, inadvertent.” It may be noted that none of the ancient versions of Hab. ii.4 supports either of the two meanings of the root given by B.D.B. The LXX has [έὰν] ὑποστείληται (“If he should draw back”), Aquila νωχελευομένου (“the slothful”), the Vulgate “qui incredulus est,” the Peshitta *wab^cawwālā* the [sic] (“and in the wicked man”) or *wab^cawlā* (“and in iniquity”), and the Targum *rašš^ct^rayyā* (“the wicked”).⁸⁵

To this needs to be added a significant observation by Brownlee: “עופלה at vii.14 confirms both text and vocalization of Mt 2:4 עפליה.”⁸⁶

In spite of the significance of the last piece of evidence, there still remain “theories that find in *uppēlāh* a word for blameworthy person” and “theories that find in *uppēlāh* a word denoting the downfall of the wicked.”⁸⁷ Most advocates of the former theory offer their suggestions based upon the assumption that **עפליה** is “strictly antithetical to **צדיק**.⁸⁸ Supporters of the latter theory consider **עפליה** to be antithetical to **חיה**. Emerton adds a conjecture of his own. It

⁸⁵Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 11. A suggested rendering of the LXX would be, “If he draw back, my soul is not well pleased with him.” And, for Aquila, “Behold, the lazy, my soul is not straight with him.” Cf. Taylor, “Introduction and Exegesis of the Book of Habakkuk,” 988. On ὑποστέλλω, see: LSJ 1895-96; TDNT, 7. 597-99. For more commentary on the Greek divergencies, see: B. F. Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950) 337-38; and Bruce, *Hebrews*, 272, n. 195. Cf. Driver’s undesirable conjecture based upon Aquila (cf. **עפל** II in KB 723): G. R. Driver, “Linguistic and Textual Problems: Minor Prophets III,” *JTS* 39 (1938) 395. For undesirable conjectures based upon the Syriac, see: Kelly, “The Strophic Structure of Habakkuk,” 103, n. 15. Henderson well notes that “the Syr. . . . wickedness, is founded upon a mistake of **עפל** for **זול**.” Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 303. Brownlee’s synopsis of the data is pertinent: “The versions seem to have read quite differently. G’s rendering ὑποστείληται, Aq’s νωχεκευομένου, and the Palestinian recension’s . . . [σ]κοτια all seem to be based upon **עַל**, which in the *Pu^cal* means ‘be covered, obscure, swoon.’ T is too paraphrastic to be of assistance here, nor can one be sure of the *Vorlage* of the Latin; but in both is the thought of unbelief read into the verb, an interpretation which could rest upon **עַל** taken to refer to a giving-up in despair through insufficient faith in the promises of God. . . . G. R. Driver . . . suggests that the *Vorlage* of Aq. and V was **העפל**, which after the Arabic . . . he interprets to mean ‘the heedless man’” (Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 43-44).

⁸⁶Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 43.

⁸⁷Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 14, 15.

⁸⁸Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 303. He suggests that **עפליה** be construed as “an abstract noun, used elliptically for **עַל** **אִישׁ**, a man of arrogance or presumption, and so to be rendered adjectively, the proud, presumptuous, &c.” (*ibid.*).

would fall into the latter category “denoting the downfall of the wicked.” Its advantage is that it does not change the consonantal text but only divides **עִפְלָה** into **עַף** **לָה**. He construes the following portion of the line as a relative clause (as do others), and renders the line: “Behold, he whose personality within him is not upright will fly away (i.e., pass away, perish [i.e., antithetical to **יְחִיָּה** in 2:4b]).”⁸⁹ Though there are advantages to his conjecture, its weakness is its novelty.

Lexically, an association with **עַפְלָל** I is preferable.⁹⁰ In view of the likely parallelism with **לֹא-יְשֻׁרָה**,⁹¹ a metaphorical extension of **עַפְלָה** is the best interpretation:

His soul is puffed up. **עַפְלָה**, perf. *pual* of **עַפְלָל**, of which the *hiphil* only occurs in Num. xiv.44, and that as synonymous with **הַנִּיד** in Deut. i.43. From this, as well as from the noun **עַפְלָל**, a hill or swelling we get the meaning, to be swollen up, puffed up, proud; and in the *hiphil*, to act haughtily or presumptuously.⁹²

An apparently similar lexical survey undergirds von Orelli’s conclusion: “Such hollow self-exaltation has been from the time of Gen. iii. a mark of a world estranged from God, and has its root in ethical impurity.”⁹³

Syntactically, there still remains the problem of rendering this verb in the light of the remainder of the line. Considering the force of **הַנִּתְבֵּה** and the concord of gender, it seems best to render it indefinitely as a maxim and appositionally with the climactic addition of the assertion which follows it: “Behold, it [i.e. his internal self, cf. **נוֹפֵשׁ בָו**] is swollen, his soul within him is not level; but a righteous one should live by his faithfulness.”

The verb **לֹא-יְשֻׁרָה** in most likely possesses a metaphorically extended sense (i.e., ethical).⁹⁴ Brownlee suggests the rendering “humble”:

One will observe . . . that the translation “humble” for *yashērāh* is according to the context. The root idea in this figurative word is

⁸⁹Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 16-17.

⁹⁰Cf. KB 723.

⁹¹Cf. Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 302.

⁹²Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 72.

⁹³Von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God’s Kingdom*, 324.

⁹⁴Cf. Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 11; Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 42ff. On the full writing in the Qumran text, see: Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 44. For general data with the important cognates, see: KB 413-14.

“level,” not “vertical”—although the well-nigh universal English translation “upright” would seem to suggest the latter. The verb is used for the leveling of hills and valleys in Isa. 40:3. In Hab. 2:4, where levelness is antithetical to “puffed up,” it is clear that the word means humility. The essence of sin according to all the Hebrew prophets is pride and rebellion . . .⁹⁵

נְפֵשׁוֹ בָּו (in **נְפֵשׁ**), of course, has a wide range of usage.

In this context, the word *nepeš* seems to denote something like ‘personality,’ and the clause in which it appears should probably be translated ‘his personality within him is not upright.’ . . . If so, it says that the person to whom it refers has a bad character.⁹⁶

Habakkuk 2:5a. Lehrman notes that Hab 2:5a is “a very difficult verse which has been variously explained by the older commentators and given up as unintelligible by the moderns.”⁹⁷ The variants represented by the versions here present the greatest challenge.⁹⁸

הַיִן is the leading challenge. An excerpt from the text found in the Qumran commentary reads **הַזֶּן יִבְגֹּד** (i.e. “Wealth is [or will be] treacherous”⁹⁹). Emerton argues for this variant and bolsters his contention with evidence which would support the fact that “a saying about the treacherous nature of wealth would be in keeping with what is said about it in wisdom literature . . .”¹⁰⁰ Certainly, this reading is worthy of consideration.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless, the Hebrew text as it stands is not unintelligible. Textually, it should be noted that “the paraphrastic renderings of T and V suggest a *Vorlage* in appropriate agreement with MT.”¹⁰² **הַיִן** also has proverbial connections (cf. Prov 20:1; Hos 4:11; Isa 5:11; Jer 23:9; Eccl 10:19).¹⁰³ Historically, a maxim concerning “wine” would

⁹⁵Brownlee, “The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk,” 324-25. The objective negation (**אַל**) of the text should be noted.

⁹⁶Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 11.

⁹⁷Lehrman, “Habakkuk,” 219.

⁹⁸Cf. Brownlee’s detailed outline of the textual data: Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 45-50.

⁹⁹Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 8.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 8. Cf. his evidence, 8-9.

¹⁰¹Emendations based upon the Greek renderings are totally unacceptable. For an example, see: Brownlee, “The Placarded Revelation of Habakkuk,” 324. For arguments against conjectures based upon the Greek readings, see: Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 1-2, 9.

¹⁰²Brownlee, *The Text of Habakkuk in the Ancient Commentary from Qumran*, 46.

¹⁰³“הַיִן בָּגָד” (**הַזֶּן יִבְגֹּד**) at vii.3 is a radical departure from Mt 2:5 (ibid. 45).

¹⁰⁴Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 7.

be particularly appropriate as its truth could be related to and illustrated by the Chaldeans (cf. Daniel 5).¹⁰⁴

Keil's summary of the second portion of the line is helpful:

The following words בָּגָד and גָּבָר יְהִיר are not the object to בָּגָד, but form a fresh sentence, parallel to the preceding one: a boasting man, he continueth not, וְלֹא introduces the apodosis to גָּבָר, which is written absolutely. גָּבָר יְהִיר only occurs again in Prov. xxi. 24, and is used there as a parallel to άλαζών (LXX), swaggering, boasting.¹⁰⁵

גָּנָה is apparently a denominative *hapax legomenon*: “move, walk to a place (nomads to pasture).”¹⁰⁶ From this, it is possible (based upon an Arabic parallel) that the intent of גָּנָה would be “reach one’s aim.”¹⁰⁷ A suggested rendering for Hab 2:5a would be: “Wine is treacherous, a proud man, and he will not be successful.” An advantage of this rendering is that it is somewhat analogous to the divergent metrical pattern already recognized and accepted in 2:4a. This rendering is one rejected by Emerton (on the basis of its personification) after comparison to two other renderings:

- (b) Wine deals treacherously with the proud man, and he will not be successful.
- (c) Wine is treacherous, and the proud man will not be successful.

Translation (b), which understands the verb *bgd* to take a direct object as in Ps. lxxiii. 15, should probably be rejected, because the natural division into lines of poetry is against it. In translation (c), the first two words of the second line are understood to be in *casus pendens*.¹⁰⁸

Logical parallels. In the light of the multiplicity of challenges relating to Hab 2:4a and 2:5a, it might seem that the immediate context is basically unintelligible. However, it should be obvious already that the basic argument of the passage is not obscured. Logical parallels compensate for particular points of uncertainty. Gowan’s reconstructions, although they do not harmonize *totally* with previously chosen options, do lead to a proper understanding of the crucial issue:

¹⁰⁴Cf. Lehrman, “Habakkuk,” 219; Henderson, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, 304. See, also: Laetsch, *Minor Prophets*, 332-33.

¹⁰⁵Keil, *Minor Prophets*, 2. 75. Concerning גָּבָר יְהִיר, see: Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II. 4-5,” 5.

¹⁰⁶KB 601. Cf. BDB 627.

¹⁰⁷KB 601 (note their uncertainty). On both the significance of the Arabic parallel and challenges concerning the pointing of the verb as a Qal, see: Driver, “Linguistic and Textual Problems: Minor Prophets III,” 395; and Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 5.

¹⁰⁸Emerton, “The Textual and Linguistic Problems of Habakkuk II.4-5,” 6.

If we find that we cannot have any real confidence (at present) in any of these suggestions, then clearly the crucial question for us is whether there is still a possibility of understanding vs. 4b in terms of its larger context, and I believe that there is. A contrast certainly is being presented between two ways: the way of vs. 4b and that of vs. 4a and possibly also 5a. So "life" in 4b is contrasted with the distortion of the person in 4a, and possibly also with the lack of endurance in 5a. "Righteousness" in 4b is contrasted with that negative quality of which we are uncertain in 4a and perhaps also with treachery and arrogance in 5a. What makes the difference between the two ways is *faithfulness*, and so we must try to see how that speaks to all that has gone before in Habakkuk.¹⁰⁹

UTILIZATION CHALLENGES

Three times in the NT Hab 2:4b is employed in crucial lines of argumentation. There are contextual affinities between Paul's lines of argument in Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11; however, these contexts are essentially different from the contextual thrust of Hab 2:4b.¹¹⁰ The employment of Habakkuk's text in Heb 10:38 (cf. vv 37-38), however, does reflect a degree of affinity in reference to OT and NT contexts. Ellis' generalizations concerning these phenomena are helpful as a footing upon which to build an investigation:

Hab. 2.4 is cited by Paul (Rom. 1.17; Gal. 3.11) to show that righteousness is not achieved through obedience to the law but through faith; the author of Hebrews uses the same passage to describe the proper attitude of the Christian toward the trials of life. In each case the life of the true believer rests on faith, but the application of the passage varies.¹¹¹

It is difficult to discern how many and how valid are Ellis' presuppositions in reference to the last sentence in this quote. It is appropriate to reiterate a major reason for the multiplicity of hermeneutical challenges relating to Hab 2:4b and its employment in the NT. Many interpreters have approached the problem in reverse by noting Paul's

¹⁰⁹Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 45.

¹¹⁰Attempts to harmonize plenarily the OT and NT contexts, aside from some peripheral benefits, have not convincingly proved their case. Cf. M. H. Franzmann, *Concordia Commentary: Romans* (St. Louis and London: Concordia, 1968) 34-38. Regarding the employment of Hab 2:4 in the NT, see Bryant, "The Meaning of Habakkuk 2:4," 36-42. For general principles pertaining to NT quotations from the LXX (including divergencies), see: E. J. Young, *Thy Word Is Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957) 149-50.

¹¹¹Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 93. Carefully compare his related argument: *ibid.*, 117-21.

citations in their context *first*; then, standing upon this presuppositional base, they work back to the original passage *in order to interpret it*. There is a need for an ultimate perspective which is systematic in scope; however, the aforementioned procedure must not be the means to that end.

Prior to a cursory examination of the NT passages, the major problem concerning the usage of πίστις needs to be remembered: "It is to be observed that the Greek word πίστις is ambiguous. It means both 'faithfulness,' and 'belief' or 'trust.'"¹¹²

In Paul

In spite of the fact that Paul's usages contextually suggest a different thrust of argument (or at least a different emphasis) from the original context, some would still insist that he is employing πίστις in a manner similar to the original **הַמִּתְּחָדָה**. These arguments follow various paths, but one of the most common suggestions is that all the contexts are emphasizing the *faithfulness of God*.¹¹³

Romans 1:17. Most of the phenomena of the Greek rendering (e.g. Rom 1:17b) have been previously discussed in conjunction with the Septuagint's renderings of the Hebrew text of Hab 2:4b (cf. above),¹¹⁴ but a consideration of related factors in the immediate context of Rom 1:17b is necessary.¹¹⁵

It was noted that the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Rom 1:17a has been construed in various ways.¹¹⁶ The major problem here is "... whether δικαιοσύνη refers to an activity of God or to a status of man

¹¹²Dodd, *The Bible and the Greeks*, 69. Cf. W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915) 31-34. See also the previous discussion on **הַמִּתְּחָדָה**. Cf: "When **הַמִּתְּחָדָה** as πίστις is given a more general sense in R. 1:17; Gl. 3:11 . . . this is not wrong but it is certainly a development of the original meaning" (Quell and Schrenk, *TDNT* 2, 177, n. 12).

¹¹³E.g., T. F. Torrance, "One Aspect of the Biblical Conception of Faith," *ExpTim* 68 (1957) 111-14. Cf. R. N. Longenecker, *Paul: Apostle of Liberty* (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, 1964) 149ff.

¹¹⁴On ἐκ πίστεως, cf. H. A. Kent, Jr., *The Freedom of God's Sons: Studies in Galatians* (Winona Lake: BMH, 1976) 88; on the importance of the object of faith, see: Lenski, *Romans*, 83; on the μου of the LXX, review: Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 339-40, n. 31; on the construing of ἐκ πίστεως with ζήσεται, review: Lenski, *Romans*, 87; Wallis, "The Translation of Romans 1:17 — A Basic Motif in Paulinism," 17-22; J. Denney, "St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans," in *The Expositor's Greek Testament* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 2. 591; cf. Eadie, *Galatians*, 245-46; and for a summary, see: Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, 250-51.

¹¹⁵Cf. Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 329ff.

¹¹⁶Cf. n. 5. On δίκαιος, also review: Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 30-31; and n. 17, above.

resulting from God's action, righteousness as a gift from God."¹¹⁷ To this must be added the related matter of the nature of the genitive θεοῦ.¹¹⁸ Without denying the essential truths pertaining to the former position, Paul's total argument would seem to confirm the intent of the latter — the word refers to man's status.

Another point of contention in this debate is the compound prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. Harris' survey merely scratches the surface:

A myriad of proposals have been made in regard to the meaning of the phrase *ek pisteōs eis pistin*, such as: from the faith of the preacher to the faith of the hearer; from God's faithfulness to man's faith; from smaller to greater degree of faith (cf. *apo doxēs eis doxan*, 2 Cor. 3:18); from faith as a starting-point to faith as a permanent condition. But it seems more natural to construe *ek* as indicating not the source or starting-point ("from faith") but the basis or means ("by faith;" as in Hab. 2:4), with the *eis pistin* either intensifying the effect of *ek pisteōs* (thus, "by faith from first to last," New International Version), or denoting the goal of God's impartation to men of a righteous status ("leading to faith"). On either of these latter views, faith is portrayed as the vital and perpetual characteristic of Christian experience.¹¹⁹

Harris' last suggestion, in the light of a broad theological scope, is worthy of particular consideration; it might be *roughly* construed as follows: the first πίστις emphasizes an active nuance, and the second πίστις, being goal oriented (i.e., εἰς), emphasizes a passive nuance. The second view (i.e., "from God's faithfulness to man's faith") has been employed in an attempt to bolster the contention that God's fidelity is the major argument that permeates both the contexts of Rom 1:17b and of Hab 2:4b. Murray recognizes the important contribution of such arguments, but he exposes their essential flaw:

It is fully admitted that wherever there is faith there is always the faithfulness of God and of Christ to which that faith is directed and from which it takes its origin. In other words, faith always involves this *polarized situation*. . . . It is one thing to say that our faith always involves a polarized situation; it is another thing altogether to say that *faith* is a polarized *expression*.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 96.

¹¹⁸Cf. ibid., 96-98; Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*, 250; Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 333-35.

¹¹⁹M. J. Harris, "Appendix: Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament," *NIDNTT* 3. 1189. Cf.: "Appendix B: From Faith to Faith"; J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), 1. 363-74; Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 336-37; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1. 99-100.

¹²⁰Murray, *Romans*, 1. 373.

In the light of all the data undergirding these synopses, Meyer's general conclusion concerning Rom 1:17 is accepted: "Finally, . . . to understand πίστις εἰς πίστιν in the sense of *faith in the faithfulness of God* . . . , is to introduce what is neither in the words nor yet suggested by the context."¹²¹

Galatians 3:11. A similar tension arises when the context of Gal 3:11b is compared with that of Hab 2:4b.¹²² Ramsay's contextual survey pays particular attention not only to the utilization of Hab 2:4b in Gal 3:11 but also to Gen 15:6 in Gal 3:6:

The phrase ἐκ πίστεως is used only once in the Septuagint, Habakkuk II 4 — "The just shall live by his faith." Paul took this saying, connected it with Genesis XV 6 — "Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted to him for righteousness" — and found in the two the proof of his doctrine of the righteousness that is of faith — δικαιοσύνη τὴν ἐκ πίστεως.¹²³

This interpretation of the data is certainly more credible than that proposed by Longenecker: "The context of Gal. 3:11 indicates that Paul interpreted *Hab. 2:4* [italics added] as human trust and reliance, not as human faithfulness or even the divine faithfulness of the LXX rendering *ek pisteōs mou*."¹²⁴ A more careful approach would be "that Paul has used the Habakkuk passage *analogically. The principle of justification by faith in the promises of God and not in human endeavor, initially set forth so clearly in the story of Abraham, is found also in Habakkuk*" [italics added].¹²⁵ Burton's careful summary of the tension demonstrates a greater degree of hermeneutical insight, as seen in the following excerpts:

The particular sense which the words bore for Paul and which he intended them to convey to his readers is undoubtedly to be determined rather by Pauline usage in general, and by the part which the sentence plays in the apostle's argument, than by the meaning which the original Heb. had for the prophet. By these considerations . . . πίστεως bears its usual active sense, required by the context, "faith." . . . The use of the passage with the active sense of πίστις involves no

¹²¹H. A. W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Hand-Book to the Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1889) 52-53.

¹²²Cf. R. A. Cole, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (TNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 96-98; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 138-39; and P. R. Jones, "Exegesis of Galatians 3 and 4," *RevExp* 69 (1972) 477-78; Hendriksen, *Galatians*, 128.

¹²³W. M. Ramsay, *A Historical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1965) 344.

¹²⁴Longenecker, *Paul: Apostle of Liberty*, 123, n. 62.

¹²⁵Johnson, "The Gospel That Paul Preached," 338-39.

radical perversion of its meaning, since faith in this sense might easily be conceived to be an ingredient or basis of faithfulness.¹²⁶

*In Hebrews*¹²⁷

A contextual affinity between Heb 10:38 and our passage is demonstrable. Dods' extremely brief summary brings out the most significant data concerning Heb 10:37-38:

In Habakkuk the conditions are similar. God's people are crushed under overwhelming odds. And the question with which Habakkuk opens his prophecy is ἔως τίνος κεκράξουμενοι καὶ οὐ μὴ εἰσακούσετες. The Lord assures him that deliverance will come and will not delay. By inserting the article, the writer of Hebrews identifies the deliverer as the Messiah, "the coming One." Cf. Mat. xi.3; Luke vii.19; Jo. vi.14. ὁ δὲ δίκαιος . . . "And the just shall live by faith," i.e. shall survive these troublous times by believing that the Lord is at hand!¹²⁸

The δέ introducing Heb 10:38 functions disjunctively:

The position of the last two clauses of the citation is reversed to avoid connecting ὑποστείληται with ὁ ἐρχόμενος. . . . If the author of Hebrews had retained the original sequence, this clause would have referred to Christ himself, since the author had already made "the coming one" definitely refer to Christ. In the new position this clause is connected with δίκαιος μου, which is now the subject of the last part of the quotation. The inversion places δέ at the beginning of the verse, which now indicates the change of subject, the new subject now being the Christian (cf. x.39).¹²⁹

Robertson notes that Heb 10:38b (cf. Hab 2:4a, LXX) is a "condition of third class with *ean* and the first aorist middle subjunctive of

¹²⁶E. D. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920) 166-67.

¹²⁷On OT quotes in Hebrews, see: G. Howard, "Hebrews and the Old Testament Quotations," *NovT* 10 (1968) 208ff. Howard challenges Westcott's universal recognition of the LXX in Hebrews; however, when he comes to Heb 10:37-38, he labels it "LXX Influence" (*ibid.*, 210).

¹²⁸M. Dods, "The Epistle to the Hebrews," in *The Expositor's Greek Testament* (reprinted; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 4. 351. Concerning the transposition of lines in Heb 10:38 from Hab 2:4 (LXX), see: *ibid.*; Westcott, *Hebrews*, 337. Cf. Delitzsch, *Hebrews*, 2. 199, 201; T. W. Lewis, "... And If He Shrinks Back" (Heb. X. 38b)," *NTS* 22 (1976) 90 (cf. n. 3); "Additional Note on X. 37f. On the quotation from Hab. ii. 3f.": Westcott, *Hebrews*, 347-48. On the alleged reference to Isa 26:20 in v. 37, see: H. A. Kent, Jr., *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972) 213, contra R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of James* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1966) 369. On the eschatological impact of v. 37, see: K. J. Thomas, "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews," *NTS* 11 (1965) 316.

¹²⁹Thomas, "The Old Testament Citations in Hebrews," 316.

hypostellō, old verb to draw oneself under or back, to withdraw, as already in Acts 20:20, 27; Gal. 2:12.”¹³⁰ Consequently, and also in the light of the larger context of Hebrews 11, Hoyt interprets the major thrust of the message of Heb 10:38-39 (cf. Hab 2:4) as follows:

Those who are truly Christian will continue in persistence to the very end (38, 39). The just shall live by faith daily. Those who draw back have never come within divine pleasure.¹³¹

THEOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

Biblical theology

Reflecting on the important precedent set by usage, it must be stated that the “Heb. *’emunah*, translated ‘faith’ in Habakkuk ii.4 (LXX *pistis*) means ‘steadfastness’ or ‘fidelity.’”¹³² Therefore, the emphasis in Habakkuk is on sanctification.¹³³

It should be observed, however, that an “emphasis” does not abrogate secondary factors reflected in the immediate and larger contexts. The two spheres of development pertaining to the verbals from the נָמָן-complex must at least be recognized in reference to the נָמָן אֶמְנוּנָה of Hab 2:4b. More importantly, the background and judicial implications of נִזְעַם must be noted. This is corroborated by the association of the roots נָמָן and נִזְעַם in this single short line.

These factors enlarge the scope of study, because they imply a background which ultimately finds its antecedent in Abraham. Contextual associations with the foundational truth of Gen 15:6 are not only likely in Hab 2:4 but also in the larger contexts of the Pauline citations (cf. Rom 4:3, 9, 22; Gal 3:6). Abraham was justified by faith (compare Gen 15:6 with Romans 4), but biblical faith manifests itself in fidelity. Within this sphere, it is legitimate to render Hab 2:4b as follows: “‘Through his fidelity of faith he shall live!’”¹³⁴ Ethical implications are preserved but not at the expense of an intricate biblical balance. This is important, because “*faith and faithfulness . . . cannot be separated. . . . Both are present in his [i.e., Habakkuk’s] book, even though his emphasis is on faithfulness.*”¹³⁵

¹³⁰A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman, 1930), 5. 417.

¹³¹H. Hoyt, *Christ—God’s Final Word to Man: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Winona Lake: BMH, n.d.) 52.

¹³²F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (TNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963) 80.

¹³³Wallis, “The Translation of Romans 1:17 — A Basic Motif in Paulinism,” 21.

¹³⁴Von Orelli, *The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God’s Kingdom*, 324.

¹³⁵Gowan, *The Triumph of Faith in Habakkuk*, 43, 44. Cf. Gowan’s whole discussion, 43ff.

Systematic theology

Paul's use of Hab 2:4b in Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11 appears to be at first glance a radical departure from the thrust of the context of the OT passage. "But that does not mean that Paul was wrong in taking Hab 2:4 as the great theme verse for his teaching about justification by faith."¹³⁶ It must be remembered that:

Paul does not teach justification by faith in a vacuum. Faith does make one righteous both forensically and, increasingly, in actuality, because faith issues in the $\epsilon\nu\; \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\phi$ relationship.¹³⁷

Once again, a full circle has been drawn. From this perspective, it is best to conclude with Westcott that "'faith' (in the Pauline sense) and 'faithfulness to God' (which is what the Prophet had in mind), in the long run, *are the same thing.*"¹³⁸

¹³⁶Ibid., 43.

¹³⁷Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 119.

¹³⁸F. B. Westcott, *St. Paul and Justification* (London: Macmillan, 1913) 52.



THE APOLOGETICAL VALUE OF THE SELF-WITNESS OF SCRIPTURE

JAMES M. GRIER, JR.

INTRODUCTION

PHILOSOPHY traditionally has handled the analysis of the origin of knowledge by making authority one of the four possible sources of knowledge. Two sources of knowledge have been viewed as secondary sources: authority and intuition-mysticism. Two sources of knowledge have been viewed as primary: empiricism-experience and rationalism-thinking. The epistemological value of authority has been to corroborate the primary sources of knowledge.

This *de facto* analysis of knowledge has lulled our critical faculties to sleep by causing us to accept the idea that there are three sources of knowledge that are independent of any dogmatic-authoritative assumptions. Knowledge has to be gained by the use of man's sensory, rational, or intuitive powers with their correlative tests for truth of correspondence, coherence, and self-evidence. All authorities must be scrutinized by these cognitive capacities of man while the empirical-rational-intuitive sources are seen as non-authoritative. The problem of knowledge has been given an answer by the definition of sources.

Reflection reveals that the empirical, rational, and mystical sources of knowledge are based on non-demonstrable assumptions and are as dogmatic and authoritarian as authority. This is simply to assert that every epistemological system begins with non-demonstrable assumptions. These assumptions constitute a very real commitment to authority, although it is obscured by the use of language and by definition.

Man has faced the question of cognitive authority from Eden until the present. Adam sought epistemological independence from God in order to decide for himself whose word was true and thus authoritative. Satan, speaking through the serpent, asserted that the eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would not result in death but rather would yield an increment of knowledge and

an expanded vista of perception. God, on the other hand, asserted that eating would bring certain death. Adam faced the problem of conflicting truth claims. To determine which claim was the true and dependable guide for conduct, Adam established a third authority. He weighed the converging and diverging evidence for each hypothesis and thus became the final authority and standard for truth.

How should Adam have responded to this epistemological-ethical test? Is it possible to identify the words of God by a standard external to those words? The purpose of this article is to explore the apologetical value of the self-referential words of God.

THE CREDIBILITY OF REVELATION

The issue

The world is full of competing religions, all of which claim authority for their position. How does one go about testing claims to religious authority for truth value? This issue divides the community of the redeemed. The revelational rational-empiricist insists that all claims to religious authority must be tested the same way that all truth claims are tested, i.e., by the inductive scientific method. The Bible must be subjected to factual tests and will be shown to be true beyond reasonable doubt when checked by history, etc. Pinnock asserts: "Probability is the guide to life; it is the guide to religious truth, too."¹

The second approach is an autopistic stance (i.e., worthy of faith in itself) which asserts that the self-testimony of Scripture is sufficient to establish its authority. Autopistic apologetics presupposes that the Bible is true and then argues from the Bible to show that it is authoritative. The seeds of authenticity are internal to the objective content of biblical revelation because it is God-breathed. The doctrine of Scripture must come from Scripture just as the doctrines of God, creation, providence, fall, redemption, and second coming must come from Scripture.

The self-witness

There would never be any basis for discussion about the authority of Scripture if the Bible did not claim authority for itself. The witness of the Bible to its own authority is both pervasive and readily accessible. There is no value in repeating the multiform pervasive

¹C. H. Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation — The Foundation of Christian Theology* (Chicago: Moody, 1971) 46. Axiopists who have taken this view include C. S. Lewis, Frank Morrison, Wilbur Smith, James Orr, John Gerstner, Kenneth Kantzer, Daniel Fuller, John Warwick Montgomery, and Benjamin Warfield.

content of the Bible's witness to its own ultimate authority.² Scripture speaks clearly of its own origin, character, and authority. Is it possible to judge that Scripture is the ultimate criterion by the application of another criterion to establish it? I think not.

Being and knowing. God is the self-contained, triune, ontological God who has created heaven and earth. He created because he willed to and his all-comprehensive plan stands behind all of reality. As the creator, he is self-sufficient and is not ontologically correlative to his creation. By his eternal purpose he has willed whatsoever comes to pass (Acts 2:23; Eph 1:3-14). This God has revealed himself in his creation and providential care and specially through his Son and his Word, i.e., Scripture. Christ is the revelator of God, and apart from his self-revelation God would not be known. Given the ultimacy of God's being and his self-revelation, man is surrounded externally and internally with the revelation of the true God. God is only known through his own self-disclosure, and in light of this it would follow that God's revelation is self-attesting. What could there be that would be an adequate witness to attest God's revelation when he is the self-existing creator? What exists in reality that is not created by God and is not revelatory of him?

The very nature of the being of God necessitates that his self-revelation would have the evidence of its authority within itself. "The God who speaks in scripture cannot refer to anything that is not already authoritatively revelational of himself."³ The quality of the being of God who exhaustively knows himself and his plan can be the only point of predication for human knowledge based on his self-revelation. The self-witness of Scripture is not just the foundation of authority for religious knowledge but for all knowledge.

Self-witness is necessary because of the uniqueness of the being of God. Murray well summarizes this idea when he writes:

It might seem analogous to the case of a judge who accepts the witness of the accused in his own defense, rather than evidence derived from all the relevant facts in the case. . . . It is fully admitted that normally it would be absurd and a miscarriage of justice for a judge to accept the testimony of the accused, rather than the verdict required by all the relevant evidence. But the two cases are not analogous. There is one sphere where self-testimony must be accepted as absolute and final.

²J. Murray, "The Attestation of Scripture," *The Infallible Word*, ed. N. Stonehouse (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1946) 17-40. Autopistic apologetes include John Calvin, Herman Bavinck, E. J. Young, Gordon Clark, Abraham Kuyper, John C. Whitcomb, Greg Bahnsen, and Robert Reymond.

³C. Van Til, *The Protestant Doctrine of Scripture* (n.p.: den Dulk Christian Foundation, 1967) 9.

This is the sphere of our relation to God. God alone is adequate witness to himself.⁴

The value of self-witness. The revelational axiom of the Christian faith in the witness of Scripture to itself brings a number of implications for apologetics. A true defense of Christianity demands the open communication of self-authenticating Scripture to man. Man must be challenged to study Scripture so that he will be confronted with its witness about God, creation, sin, man, Christ, and redemption. It would be fruitless to defend a self-authenticating Scripture by abstract non-scriptural argument. The value of that self-witness must be put to use in the careful enunciation of its content.⁵ He must be challenged to total repentance and not the addition of a religious experience to his present mental set. Knowing that the Bible is true and authoritative is nothing but hearing and obeying the voice of God.

The communication of the redemptive revelation that is necessary, authoritative, clear, and sufficient would necessitate that we never allow a man to get into the position where he can judge what God has said or has not said. To allow the individual an extra-biblical standard to judge the credibility of Scripture implies that the sinner already knows what God can or cannot reveal.⁶ This would be in clear contradiction to the biblical assertion of the necessity of revelation for man to know anything. Every fact in the universe is in dispute. To capitulate to the unregenerate demand for autonomy and submit the biblical revelation and its evidence to his viewpoint is to deny what Scripture says about him as a sinner whose mind is at enmity against God.

The internal evidence ought to be presented unashamedly from the starting point of the Bible as God's authoritative word. It ought to be presented with the force of an absolute demand and the prayer that God the Holy Spirit will open the blind eyes of the hearer so that he will see the overwhelming evidence and bow in repentance and faith. In his natural state the unregenerate man suppresses every aspect of God's natural and special revelation. The evidence in him, around him, and in Scripture is sufficient and final. There is no weakness in the evidence. The problem is that man cannot see. He doesn't need more evidence; he needs new birth. The living, abiding Word of God as self-attestingly sure, blessed by the regenerating activity of the Holy Spirit, is his only hope.

⁴Murray, "The Attestation of Scripture," 9, 10.

⁵J. Frame, "Scripture Speaks for Itself," *God's Inerrant Word*, ed. J. W. Montgomery (Minneapolis: Bethany, 1974) 179.

⁶R. Reymond, *The Justification of Knowledge* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1976) 16.

THE PROBLEM OF CIRCULAR REASONING

Revelational rational-empiricists have asserted that to accept the Bible as true based on its own witness is to reason in a circle and thus remove Christianity from the arena of intellectual credibility. Pinnock boldly asserts that the position of self-witness is nothing but fideism and puts it in the camp of neo-orthodoxy and mysticism.⁷ The immediate point to be noted is that the argument has dealt with the objective content of revelation and not with subjective religious experience. The appeal to Scripture to validate the authority of Scripture is an appeal to an objective content that is God-breathed. Is it question-begging?

Presuppositions are universal

Every system has a self-referential starting point that cannot be validated by an authority. It must simply be accepted as self-referential. This starting point will have metaphysical implications as well as ethical implications. In the case of pure empiricism, the assumption is that what can be known by man must originate in sensory experience. All the generals of knowledge are inductive inferences from the plurality of sense experience. This epistemological authority implies that what is real is extended in time and space, and thus morals and values have no objective referent.

The point is obvious! All epistemological authorities start with linguistic assertions that are self-referential. From these starting points a circular world-life view is developed. Since Babel and its pluriform communication, multiple views vie for men's allegiance. Man in his rebellion against God does not agree on one system, but has multiple alternatives. All of his systems share one thing in common — that the claims of God in the Bible cannot be true. Agreement extends to the ultimacy of man and his capacities as the only tolerable starting point for knowledge. Ultimate authorities cannot be validated by appeals to other authorities, for then ultimacy is obviously lost. Sinful man, with his autonomous ultimacy, reasons in a vicious circle, the result of which is his own intellectual and moral suicide.

A non-vicious circle

"In the beginning, God . . ." (Gen 1:1). "God created man" (Gen 1:27). The ultimacy of the being of God necessitates that man's being

⁷Pinnock, *Biblical Revelation*, 42-44. For a careful refutation of Pinnock's charges, see G. L. Bahnsen, "Inductivism, Inerrancy, and Presuppositionalism," *JETS* 20 (1977) 289-305.

is derived and dependent on God. No matter what he says or does, man is God's creature and is accessible to God. God has, by wise council and deliberation, foreordained all things that come to pass. He has revealed himself and his plan in a once-for-all, prophetic-apostolic revelation that he breathed out. God has exhaustive knowledge of himself and his plan, and thus his revelation is the basis for knowing in his created world. Man is God's creature and is dependent on God for knowledge through his self-revelation. The evidence for the truth of God's revelation is internal to the revelation and is adapted to man in language form. The right response of the creature is to believe and obey this revelation with thanksgiving. Sin has blinded the eyes of the creature. The gentle grace of the Holy Spirit opens his eyes to the light of God's revelation and he steps into the circle of truth. Knowledge can now be justified on the basis of the self-revealing God. Regenerate man can now explicate all the internal evidence of Scripture as his authority and confront the unbeliever with the Word of the living God.

— Sola Scriptura —

A THEOLOGY OF PSEUDOPROPHETS: A STUDY IN JEREMIAH

RONALD E. MANAHAN

A large corpus of material on false prophets is contained in the book of Jeremiah. This material furnishes opportunity for understanding the theological perspective from which these pseudoprophets spoke and acted. The question is: What theological conceptions did they hold? A survey of recent prophetic and pseudoprophetic research indicates that analysis of historical contexts and audience response helps to answer the question. The present proposal is that a tentative reconstruction of pseudoprophet theology can be developed if attention is given to: (1) audience response, (2) origin of pseudoprophets' revelations, (3) characterization of pseudoprophets, and (4) pseudoprophet quotations. Accordingly this analysis indicates that pseudoprophets held to a "Para-Covenantal" theology built on hopes attached to the temple and the dynasty. Jerusalem's existence was without condition and Mosaic Covenant infractions were of no consequence. They spoke only in part of Yahweh's covenant with his people. Thus, due warning is given those who speak or hear only a part of God's revelation to man, an error too prevalent in contemporary speaking and hearing of God's Word.

* * *

WHILE the term *pseudoprophet* has its origin in the LXX, so numerous are the mentions of these prophets who oppose Yahweh's work and will that the term ψευδοπροφήτης serves as a meaningful title for such persons.¹ From a survey of the OT record there is clear indication that false prophets persisted throughout Israel's history. This fact, along with the diametrical opposition to false prophets by canonical prophets, the complex problem of distinguishing between true and false prophets, and the belief that

¹Concerning the LXX translators' usage of ψευδοπροφήτης on ten occasions, J. L. Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict* (BZAW 124; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1971) 1, says: "In ten places the attack by one prophet upon another was so severe that the Septuagint translators used the word *pseudoprophetes* to translate *nabi*."

understanding the theological conceptions of false prophets enhances understanding of canonical prophets, raises the question: What theological conceptions did pseudoprophets hold?

Though the length of this paper prohibits a complete treatment of all OT references to false prophets, the book of Jeremiah furnishes the necessary data to begin answering the above question. Several reasons may be cited for this selection. This book contains a volume of material on false prophets, enough data to make a judicious, if cautious, analysis. Further, an especially sharp contrast between true and false prophets is presented, cursorily indicated by the fact that of the ten times the LXX translators used *ψευδοπροφήτης*, nine are in Jeremiah.² Still another reason for selecting this book is that the rapidly changing international political climate of Jeremiah's time seemed to demand religious explanations for Judah's precarious situation; one would expect to find such explanations, and one is not disappointed. Both true and false prophets offered explanations, and these provide further material for answering the questions regarding the theological conceptions of false prophets.

If the book of Jeremiah is to be utilized as suggested above, the text of the book must be taken seriously. Gerstenberger's pessimistic judgment that the "facts and figures" are not necessarily identifiable with "historical events" must be abandoned.³ Admittedly, a number of textual questions arise in this book, but they certainly do not warrant the judgment of Gerstenberger.⁴

As already indicated, the international climate of Jeremiah's day was stormy. While a detailed history of Jeremiah's day would serve no particular function here, Klein's summary seems to be consistent with the international political picture:

Jeremiah lived at a time when the principal roles in the monotonous drama of Middle Eastern politics were changing hands in quite unexpected ways. Old powers were too exhausted to bear the weight of

²The ten references (MT) where the LXX uses *ψευδοπροφήτης* are Jer 6:13; 26:7, 8, 11, 16; 27:9; 28:1; 29:1, 8 and Zech 13:2.

³So E. Gerstenberger, "Jeremiah's Complaints: Observations on Jer. 15:10-21," *JBL* 82 (1963) 393, gloomily observes: "Jeremiah is looked upon as a religious genius, the champion of personal, inner, and spiritual religion. The basic fallacy of this viewpoint is the presupposition that the 'facts and figures' in Jer. are identical with 'historical events,' or, that they, at least, permit easy access to that which 'really happened' during Jeremiah's lifetime."

⁴For a discussion of textual matters relating to Jeremiah see the following: C. von Orelli, *The Prophecies of Jeremiah*, trans. J. S. Banks (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1889); J. Bright, *Jeremiah* (AB 21; Garden City: Doubleday, 1965); E. C. Rust, *Covenant and Hope* (Waco: Word, 1972); J. G. Janzen, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (HSM 6; Cambridge: Harvard University, 1973). As an example of a recent treatment of this subject see E. Tor, "Exegetical Notes on the Hebrew Vorlage of the LXX of Jeremiah 27 (34)," *ZAW* 91 (1979) 73-93.

events, and new powers were eagerly responding to the invitation of chance. The effect of these conditions was sharply felt in Syria and Palestine.⁵

For Judah all this meant essentially was that while Assyrian supremacy was gone (612 B.C.), it had been replaced by the menacing threat of Babylonian-Egyptian tensions.

A better perspective of pseudoprophet theology will be gained through an understanding of recent false prophet interpretation. This brief survey will be the concern of the first section. Thereupon will follow an appraisal of the pertinent data from Jeremiah. In the final section, the conclusions of this study will be presented.

RECENT INTERPRETATIONS OF PSEUDOPROPHETS

General observations

Several observations help to illumine recent commentary on pseudoprophets. Prophetic research in general has moved about three centers of concern: the man, the message, and audience response reflecting popular religion.⁶ While all three of these areas are related, the chronology of their popularity as centers of research is in the order given above.

Hölscher emphasized that all prophecy was ecstatic, and Lindblom posited the notion that ecstasy was the central factor in understanding prophecy.⁷ Emphasis of this sort necessitated that the prophet as man be the focus of research in order to articulate prophetic phenomena. Mowinckel concluded that, whereas earlier prophets had emphasized their prophetic movement as being prompted by the Spirit of Yahweh, later prophets stressed the importance of receiving the Word of Yahweh. By this assessment Mowinckel suggested that in the later prophets the true could be distinguished

⁵W. C. Klein, "Commentary on Jeremiah," *ATR* 45 (1963) 122.

⁶Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 5ff. Note also the discussion of Rust, *Covenant and Hope*, 104.

⁷Note *ibid.*, 7; C. Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967) 21-23; J. Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1965). In connection with focusing attention on the ecstatic experience of prophecy, E. J. Young, *My Servants, the Prophets* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952) 164-65, concludes: "That the prophets were ecstasies was not first suggested by Hölscher. Before him, men like Giesebrrecht, Knobel, and Stade had advanced the same idea. The view, however, is really much older. We shall probably find the first presentation of it in the writings of Philo. In his discussion of Genesis 15 Philo identifies sleep which fell upon Abraham as an ecstasy. This ecstasy, he says, may take different forms. It may be a madness which produces mental delusion (*paranoian*). It may be extreme amazement at sudden and unexpected events. On the other hand it may be mere passivity of the mind, but in its best form it is a divine possession or frenzy . . . such as came upon the prophetic class."

from the false because the former, recipients of Yahweh's Word, were rational guides leading the nation to right actions (those consistent with Yahweh's nature and demands). The false were possessed of the frenzied (i.e., irrational) Spirit of Yahweh and therefore were inadequate for presenting Yahweh's demands rationally.⁸

A number of scholars concentrated their efforts on the message. The awareness of prophetic speech forms became the chief product of this investigation. The lineage of this development of speech form research can be traced through W. W. Baudissin, C. Steuernagel, G. Hölscher, H. Gunkel, H. Gressmann, J. Lindblom, L. Koehler, E. Balla, R. B. Y. Scott, H. Wildberger, J. Hempel, H. W. Wolff, and E. Würthwein.⁹ In recent years, this area of research has proven fertile. Men such as D. R. Hillers¹⁰ and K. Baltzer¹¹ have concentrated their efforts on the treaty orientation of prophetic literature. So prevalent has been this concerted attention to the covenantal nature of the literature that R. E. Clements has sounded a warning against overemphasis: because the traditions lack unity, the covenant theme cannot be traced throughout the prophets.¹² On the other hand, N. Habel has concentrated on the form of the call narratives.¹³ In all, considerable attention has been given to the prophetic message.

A relatively new concept in the arena of prophetic research has been the idea that audience response was conditioned by the tenets of popular religion. Crenshaw believes that research in this area will yield a great deal of new information for better understanding of the prophets,¹⁴ and indicates approval of A. S. van der Woude's call to attention to the important nature of prophetic quotations and quotations of false prophets.¹⁵ These quotations provide an avenue of

⁸See S. Mowinkel, "'The Spirit' and the 'Word' in the Pre-Exilic Reformatory Prophets," *JBL* 53 (1934) 199-227.

⁹At least this is the reasoned judgment of Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, 13-89.

¹⁰D. R. Hillers, *Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets* (BibOr 16; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964) 1-89. See also F. C. Fensham, "Common Trends in Curses of the Near Eastern Treaties and *Kudurru*-Inscriptions Compared With the Maledictions of Amos and Isaiah," *ZAW* 75 (1963) 155-75.

¹¹K. Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971) 1-180.

¹²R. E. Clements, *Prophecy and Tradition* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975).

¹³N. Habel, "The Form and Significance of the Call Narratives," *ZAW* 77 (1965) 297-323.

¹⁴Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 13. Note, however, the opinion of A. Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1962) 50-51.

¹⁵See A. S. van der Woude, "Micah In Dispute With the Pseudoprophets," *VT* 19 (1969) 245, where he reasons: "Is it at all possible to give a somewhat exact description of the theologoumena through which pseudo-prophetism exercised its influence on the religious life in Jerusalem and Judah at the close of the eighth century B.C.? Needless to say, if we could trace these theologoumena, we would be in a position to fathom the

insight into the religious views held by the general populace. Crenshaw's research led him to conclude that

It is only as one becomes familiar with the voice of the people that he can understand false prophecy. . . . The following will seek to show that the *vox populi* is characterized by: (1) confidence in God's faithfulness, (2) satisfaction with traditional religion, (3) defiance in the face of prophets who hold a different view, (4) despair when hope seems dead, (5) doubt as to the justice of God, and (6) historical pragmatism.¹⁶

Specific tendencies

These three areas of concern (man, message, and audience response) in prophetic research have produced corollary responses in treatment of the pseudoprophets.¹⁷ These have come in the form of three specific tendencies: (1) a denial of valid objective criteria for distinguishing false from true prophets, (2) an attempt to understand false prophets on the basis of the historical moment of the prophetic word, and (3) a belief that distinguishing false from true prophets requires an analysis of the nature of audience response conditioned by the leading tenets of popular religion.

The first of these tendencies is seen in the work of J. Hempel who "denied the validity of the criterion of fulfillment in distinguishing true from false prophecy."¹⁸ Non-fulfillment of prophetic utterance was not necessarily an indication of false prophecy; it was only a new occasion for the prophet to apply the traditional message in a new way. The issue is not so much, then, the nature of prophetic utterance as it is the prophet's ability to adapt.¹⁹ In this way Hempel concentrated on the man, not so much the message. Von Rad agrees in principle with Hempel's position, for in discussing Jeremiah's encounters with pseudoprophets he concludes:

Deuteronomy too tries — not very successfully — to draw up objective criteria by means of which the false prophet might be recognized (Deut. XVIII.21). The contradiction between prophet and prophet,

spiritual climate against which the pre-Exilic canonical prophets made their stand. In general it can be said that the pseudoprophets subscribed and conformed to the established order not only politically but also in matters of religion."

¹⁶Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 24.

¹⁷Ibid., 13.

¹⁸Ibid., 14.

¹⁹Cf. ibid., 15, where Hempel's position is analyzed accordingly. "It was this 'aliveness' of the spoken word and readiness of the prophet to adapt a previous word to a new situation that prompted him to deny that the lack of fulfillment of a prediction was in itself proof of false prophecy."

each speaking in the name of Jahweh (cf. Jer. XXVII. 4, XXVIII. 2), must have been particularly confusing in the final period of the Monarchy. . . . The falsity [i.e., of the prophets] cannot be seen either in the office itself, or in their words themselves, or in the fallibility of the man who spoke them. It could only be seen by the person who had true insight into Jahweh's intentions for the time, and who on the basis of this, was obliged to deny that the other had illumination.²⁰

Von Rad's judgment also characterizes a second tendency, an attempt to understand false prophets on the basis of the historical moment of the prophetic word. The prophetic word is either weal or woe, depending upon any given cultic adaptation of traditional oracular material for a specific historical context (moment of history).²¹ Thus Overholt contends "that to be true the message of a prophet must proclaim Yahweh's will in terms appropriate to the concrete historical situation in which the prophet finds himself. . . ."²² How were prophets to be evaluated (in light of truth or falsity) if not "in the dual light of an affirmation about their religious heritage and a knowledge of the historical situation in which they lived?"²³ A religious heritage must, therefore, always be interpreted in light of a changing historical context.

Overholt's understanding, while certainly agreeing in many respects with von Rad's, also brings to the foreground a third tendency in recent treatment of false prophets — a belief that distinguishing false from true necessitates an analysis of the nature of audience response conditioned by the leading tenets of popular religion. "We find," contends Overholt, "that when two apparently equally compelling prophets of Yahweh were in conflict, the key to the resolution of the problem lay in an interpretation of the people's religious heritage."²⁴ Crenshaw has attempted this type of interpretation and suggests that there were six leading tenets which characterized popular religion.²⁵ Surely if no valid objective criteria exist for differentiating false and true prophets, and if a true prophet is such because his message matches Yahweh's will to a contemporary context, then of necessity the historical context in which the message was spoken must be understood. The voice of the people as reflected in

²⁰G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (2 vols.; New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 2, 210, n. 27 (words in brackets are added). Others who agree in principle with Hempel and von Rad are Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 110-11, and T. W. Overholt, "Jeremiah 27-29: The Question of False Prophecy," *JAAR* 35 (1967) 241-49.

²¹This is the judgment of Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*, 15, based on von Rad's article, "Die Falschen Propheten," *ZAW* 53 (1933) 109-20.

²²Overholt, "Jeremiah 27-29," 248.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., 241.

²⁵See, above, 81.

prophetic literature should then help explain the given historical context and should supply the principle by which a pseudoprophet could be detected.

Summary observations

The foregoing survey indicates that scholarship has made a number of contributions to understanding pseudoprophets, namely, recognizing the importance of analyzing the various historical contexts in which both false and true prophets spoke and underscoring the notion that audience response will help greatly in understanding the false prophet.

However, this survey also brings to light several deficiencies. Much of recent scholarship has labored under a less than adequate view of the biblical text.²⁶ While many aspects of contemporary understanding of pseudoprophets have been covered, one issue that has received little attention is an analysis of the actual components of pseudoprophet theology.²⁷ This is true especially in the case of the book of Jeremiah, a book very interested in pseudoprophets.

In order to discover the theological tenets of these prophets, an adequate method is necessary. The statement and finds of this method are the concerns of the following.

TENETS OF PSEUDOPROPHET THEOLOGY

A suggested methodology

A tentative reconstruction of pseudoprophet theology²⁸ can be developed if the following methodology is employed: analysis of (1) the audience response, (2) the origin of the pseudoprophets' supposed revelations, (3) the characterization of pseudoprophets in the text, and (4) pseudoprophet quotations.

Before moving directly to the audience response, a word must be said about the fact that Jeremiah's book ranges over many years, with a number of historical and political changes. Perhaps a variety of changes in the theological systems employed by false prophets are to

²⁶Cf. the observation on the importance of taking the text of the Bible seriously (p. 78) with the views of the Bible held by those such as von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 2; Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict*; and Overholt, "Jeremiah 27-29"; to name a few.

²⁷Two who have made notable attempts, though from different perspectives, are van der Woude, "Micah In Dispute With the Pseudo-prophets," and J. T. E. Renner, "False and True Prophecy," *Reformed Theological Review* 25 (1966) 96-104. To be sure, numerous others have made at least a partial attempt to deal with actual theological tenets of pseudoprophetism.

²⁸Theology is here understood as that corpus of religious ideas which together express a distinctive religious perspective.

be found. However, as one moves through the history recorded in the book, he discovers a remarkable similarity among the pseudo-prophets' theological views.²⁹ Therefore, it is possible to talk in terms of this book yielding a picture of the components of a *unified theology* of pseudoprophets. Furthermore, a definition of a true prophet is needed. True prophets may be regarded collectively as those

. . . persons whose entire life-style (words *and* actions) was submitted to God's purposes and empowered by the Spirit and who served variously as (1) God's channel of revelatory information to the subjects of the mediatorial kingdom, (2) exhorters of obedience to mediatorial kingdom regulations, and (3) pointers to the coming Messiah whose work would merge the rulership of the mediatorial kingdom and the office of God's spokesman in that kingdom into one person.³⁰

Audience response

The nation of Judah responded in a number of ways to prophetic utterance (of whatever type) and to the changing historical situation. For present purposes the concern with audience response is at points where it may help in illuminating the religious state of the nation and thereby cast light on the theological formulations of false prophets.³¹ Audience response may be categorized in two ways: by actions and by words.

²⁹ Certainly, however, there were several types of false prophets throughout Israel's history; see Young, *My Servants the Prophets*, 125ff., and J. B. Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962) 56, who says: "In actuality, Israel had, by Ahab's time, become plagued with false prophets. These, in turn, fell into three major categories. There were Jezebel's outrightly pagan prophets, who served Baal and Asherah (I Kings 18:19); there were the hypocritical charlatans of Ahab's court (22:6, 7), prophets for pay, a disgrace to the name of the Lord (Micah 3:11; cf. Amos 7:12); and there were sincere prophets, who were well-meaning but still revelationless, and hence mistaken (I Kings 13:11-18)."

³⁰ R. Manahan, "Prophetic Office in Historical Perspective" (unpublished Th.M. thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1977) 135-36.

³¹ For a recent discussion of audience response to Jeremiah's utterances see W. J. Horwitz, "Audience Reaction to Jeremiah," *CBQ* 32 (1970) 555-64, where he describes his methodology: "In this paper we have tried to discover what can be learned about Jeremiah by examining the source most contemporary with him, the responses of his audience." An article by D. R. Hillers, "A Convention in Hebrew Literature: The Reaction to Bad News," *ZAW* 77 (1965) 86-90, also helps detail audience response by drawing attention to Ugaritic parallels to bad-news reactions in the OT prophets, Jer 6:22-23, 24; 49:23, and 50:43 especially being noteworthy. But T. Overholt, "Jeremiah 2 and the Problem of 'Audience Reaction,'" *CBQ* 41 (1979) 262-73 cautions that "the consistency between the quotations and the prophet's message might well be explained by his own conscious construction of his speeches: on the basis of his experience Jeremiah may have selected from, altered, even created 'audience reactions' to serve as foils for his indictment of the people."

A survey of the book of Jeremiah indicates several features of the actions of the nation. On at least two occasions the book illustrates the religiously deviate ways of the nation by picturing them as “well-fed lusty horses, each one neighing after his neighbor’s wife” (Jer 5:8) and “as a well keeps its waters fresh, so she keeps fresh her wickedness” (6:7). The actual situation which gave rise to these illustrations is that the people refused correction from Yahweh (5:3), refused to repent (8:6), closed their ears against Yahweh’s word (both king — 36:23; 37:2-3 — and subjects — 7:13, 25-27) filled the temple complex with contemptible things (7:30-31), did not speak truth (6:28-30; 7:28; 8:6; 9:2-6), and sacrificed to other deities and served them (7:18; 12:6; 13:10; 18:15; 19:4; 32:29; 44:16-18). However, these characteristics do not necessarily distinguish the people of Jeremiah’s day from those of a prior era. The nation’s spiritual history had been marred by numerous spiritual degradations.

But there are several features of the people’s actions that seem to characterize Jeremiah’s day in particular. While the people had served other deities, as noted above, they were nonetheless engaged in offering sacrifices to Yahweh (6:20).³² One of the judgments the people seem to have made is that physical sacrifice (to whomever it may be made) has a direct relationship to welfare and misfortune. In Jer 44:16-18 is recorded an audience response (both by action and word) to Jeremiah’s statement to the Jews living in Egypt. Yahweh’s word through Jeremiah was that sacrifice to other gods had brought the outpouring of God’s wrath (44:2-14). But the claim of the people is that sacrifice to other gods brought prosperity and lack of sacrifice to these same deities brought misfortune (44:16-18). Therefore, they concluded, a continuation of pagan sacrifice was required. On an earlier occasion (11:15) Yahweh had indicated that sacrifices to him were not enough to avoid a coming judgment. Sacrifice alone would not keep Jerusalem safe. To the very end, though, the people (there were some deserters to Babylonian forces — 38:19; 39:9) from the king down had held that Jerusalem would not fall (37:1ff.). All of this was maintained in spite of obvious breaking of Yahweh’s covenant with this people (11:10; 17:19-23; 43:4, 7). Yahweh’s contention with his people was that covenant breakage was the reason for judgment (11:1-8).

From the above description two patterns emerge. The popular conclusion was that good (weal) and misfortune (woe) were condi-

³²Both T. Laetsch, *Bible Commentary: Jeremiah* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1952) 87, and C. F. Keil, *The Prophecies of Jeremiah* (Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1950), I. 145, comment on this point. Keil says: “The people had no shortcoming in the matter of sacrifice in the temple; but in this service, as being mere outward service of works, the Lord has no pleasure, if the heart is estranged from Him, rebels against His commandments.”

tioned upon externals (i.e., sacrifices). The popular misunderstanding was that weal and woe were not necessarily the outworking of Yahweh's covenantal promises.

To be added to the above material on audience response are the numerous quotations of the people. An analysis of these passages yields the following assertions. To be expected is the obstinate refusal of the people to follow in Yahweh's will (6:16, 17; 7:10; 18:12; 22:21). In addition, there is indication of an attachment to externals — the temple (7:4), the religious functionaries (18:18), and the law (8:8). In these cases there is a confidence in the very *presence* of these objects. In some way these objects attest to a higher religious truth. What is especially striking in the audience quotations is the material on Jerusalem's continuance and Yahweh's faithfulness. Clearly the people desired peace (8:15; 43:1-2); and this peace was thought of as consistent with the nation's continuance. Numerous times the people expressed confidence that Jerusalem would not fall (17:15; 20:10; 21:13; 36:29; 37:9). Jeremiah was, in fact, considered a traitor and a liar when he suggested otherwise (37:13; 38:4; 43:1-2). While on occasion there may have been some loss of confidence (33:24),³³ the people generally did not conceive of Jerusalem's fall. There was also confidence in Yahweh's faithful execution of his promises (5:12; 8:19-22). They evidently understood that his faithful execution of promises incorporated the preservation of Jerusalem and the nation. They lament in captivity, "Harvest is past, summer is ended, and we are not saved" (8:20). That Jerusalem fell caused them to doubt the promises, not to evaluate their personal lives.

By fitting together the pieces of the audience response puzzle, the following picture emerges. They believed:

- (1) That weal and woe were conditioned on the physical act of sacrifice, not on the entire covenant Yahweh made with his people.
- (2) That Yahweh was faithful to his promises and that these promises included preservation of the nation from Babylonian conquest.
- (3) That Yahweh's faithful fulfillment of his promises and the nation's fall were contradictory and thus cause for despair.³⁴
- (4) That the continuing presence of externals such as the temple, law, and religious functionaries was evidence that Yahweh

³³Note von Orelli, *The Prophecies of Jeremiah*, 253.

³⁴Traces of these elements of contradiction and despair seem to be reflected in the Lachish Letters. Note J. B. Pritchard (ed.), *ANET* (3rd ed.; Princeton: Princeton University 1969) 322. Laetsch in *Bible Commentary: Jeremiah*, 275, gives a succinct evaluation of the relevance of the Lachish material for Jeremiah studies. Note the more extended discussion by U. Cassuto, *Biblical and Oriental Studies, Vol. II: Bible and Ancient Oriental Texts* (Jerusalem: Magnes 1975) 229ff.

would give weal, not woe, to his people.

(5) That moral degradation of the nation held no necessary implications about Yahweh's faithful preservation of the nation from Babylonian hands.³⁵

Origin of pseudoprophet "revelation"

Once the issue of the national background from which both Jeremiah and the false prophets spoke has been established, the discussion can turn directly to issues relating to the pseudoprophets themselves. For analyzing their theology it is best to begin with its origin, "revelation." The amount of material on this subject is small (fewer than 15 references) but nonetheless relevant. The references divide into two groupings, those of the pseudoprophets' own opinion and those containing reference to evaluation by others.

The personal testimony of the pseudoprophets is that by dreams (23:25) they received divine information (חֲלָמָתִי). While this word may refer to prophetic dreams, its usage in Deut 13:1-2 makes clear that to dream a dream does not make one a true prophet.³⁶ The problem with using dreams as a claim to divine truth has been captured by Naegelsbach: "The dream is farthest withdrawn from the control of other men. Nothing is easier than to say: 'Last night I dreamed this or that!' Who can refute it? These prophets made an immoderate and questionable use of dreams."³⁷ Also, these false prophets prefaced their utterances by, "The Lord has said" (23:17). That this expression was frequent is indicated by the several times the book of Jeremiah recalls that these false prophets claimed to speak in

³⁵ Interesting is the fact that while the chosen people were perplexed over the fall of the nation, foreigners at least knew well enough the connection between sin and subsequent fall (22:8-9).

³⁶ See BDB 321, where cognates are also given.

³⁷ Note Laetsch, *Bible Commentary: Jeremiah*, 200, and C. W. E. Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah* (Lange's Commentaries; New York: Scribner's Sons, 1915) 214. S. Cramer, "The Practice of Divination in the Old Testament" (unpublished Old Testament Seminar paper, Grace Theological Seminary, Fall, 1973) 20-21, further explains that "the use of dreams, or inspirational divination, has been regarded as the most direct means of divination . . . Often a dream was induced by means of incubation. This was accomplished by sleeping in some sacred place where gods or spirits would reveal knowledge to the sleeper. Possibly this is what Isaiah was referring to when he spoke of those 'who remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments' (Is. 55:4)." Further references for study of the issue of divination and the origin of the false prophets' message are T. W. Davies, *Magic, Divination, and Demonology* (New York: KTAV, 1969); S. H. Hooke, *Babylonian and Assyrian Religion* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1953); Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel*, 30ff.; B. O. Long, "The Effect of Divination Upon Israelite Literature," *JBL* 92 (1973) 489-97; G. F. Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1883) 464; and R. B. Zuck, "The Practice of Witchcraft in the Scriptures," *BSac* 128 (1971) 352-60.

Yahweh's name (14:15; 23:25; 27:15; 29:8-9; 29:21). To speak thus would not only give a ring of authenticity to their words but would make their fraudulent claim most difficult to detect alongside the true prophets who also spoke in Yahweh's name.

Yahweh's evaluation (and Jeremiah's, also) is that the pseudo-prophets' messages, while claiming authentication for oracular material, did not originate in Yahweh's council (23:18), and thus they were not given by Yahweh (23:31; 29:31).³⁸ "But if they had stood in My council, then they would have announced My words to My people" (23:22). A confrontation between Yahweh and false prophet was missing.

Two other times Yahweh gives his evaluation of the origin of the message of false prophets. "They speak a vision of their own imaginations" (חַזְׁוֹן לְבָם יִצְׁבָּרוּ). In 23:26 the origin of their message is further described: "Is there *anything* in the hearts of the prophets who prophecy falsehood, even *these* prophets of the deception of their own heart."³⁹ The following verse indicates that the intention of such doings is "to make My people forget My name by their dreams which they relate to one another" (23:27). Initially it appears that the origin of their message is in their own heart, a deceptive human heart (תְּרֵמָתָה; cf. 17:9, עֲקָבָב, "crafty").⁴⁰ But the context that follows goes on to develop a fuller picture of the origin of pseudoprophets "revelation." The leading traits of their "revelations" are mixing of falsity and truth (23:28) and stealing Yahweh's words from other sources (23:30). Laetsch has well summarized this passage:

Since I am the omnipresent God, let every prophet be honest and faithful in preaching My Word — God, who knows the heart of man, demands that man be honest. If a prophet has had a dream which he would like to tell his neighbors, let him be honest enough to say: I am telling you a dream of my own. And if a prophet has My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully, literally, as truth, just as it has been given to him, without alteration, without changing its sense in the least. How dare man mingle the chaff of his own dreams into the pure wheat of the Word of the omnipresent, omniscient Lord Jehovah in order to

³⁸ While the discussion of E. Kingsbury, "The Prophets and the Council of Yahweh," *JBL* 83 (1964) 279-86, is helpful in discussing especially Micaiah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, he overdraws the parallels between these prophets and Babylonian literature.

³⁹ Jer 23:26 is particularly problematic textually. Discussions of the textual difficulties can be found in Keil, *The Prophecies of Jeremiah*, 362-63, and Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 214-15. The major questions concern the double interrogatives (תְּהִנֶּה and -הִנֶּה) in the MT, whether the reading of the LXX, Syriac, Targum, and Vg is preferable, and whether וְ should be read וְנָא (ibid., 215).

⁴⁰ Note W. L. Holladay (ed.), *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971) 281 and 395, where he suggests reading תְּרֵמָתָה as תְּרֵמָתִת.

find more ready and willing hearers! . . . Whatever truth they preached, they did not obtain, as they claim, by divine revelation. They stole this truth, 'a man from his neighbor,' from someone else, either directly from a true prophet, or from some other false prophet who also had stolen it, or from any other person.⁴¹

In summary, the book of Jeremiah declares that the origin of pseudoprophet theology was through a mixture of purported dreams and Yahweh's Word stolen from other sources, all of which sprang out of the deceptive hearts of men whose intention was to make the nation forget Yahweh's character.

A characterization of pseudoprophets

False prophet traits as depicted in the book of Jeremiah follow the pattern established for the origin of their message. These traits may be grouped for convenience into five divisions: (1) personal immorality, (2) encouragement of evil, (3) confidence, (4) compatibility with the populace, and (5) ineffectiveness. The goal of this analysis is to suggest the nature of a theology consistent with these traits. Their theology evidently could legitimize such traits and was compatible with them.

Personal immorality. Of course, not every false prophet is condemned for gross immorality. Hananiah in 28:1ff. is not so condemned, with the exception of the reference to his not speaking Yahweh's word (28:15-16).

Two passages are worthy of discussion here: 6:13 and 29:23. In the first of these, the description of pseudoprophets is that they deal falsely and are greedy of gain. Base gain replaced a desire to lead the nation into obedience to covenant stipulations. Their desire for base gain seems to serve as the reason for Yahweh's promise (v 12) that he will turn valuables (houses, fields, etc.) over to others. As they sought gain, so things they valued would be given to their enemies. Base gain as a principle of operation led the false prophets to bring only superficial healing (6:14).⁴² They also made inaccurate analyses of the degree of the nation's security (6:14).

⁴¹Laetsch, *Bible Commentary: Jeremiah*, 201.

⁴²The issue of prophets seeking gain is also suggested by Mic 3:11. In the Jer 6:12-14 passage, the false prophets are cited for only superficially (note Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 319, where he translates the Niphal feminine participle נִקְלָה, from קָלַל, by "superficially") healing the wound of the people. The nature of the wound is suggested by the same usage of this term, שָׁבֵר, in Jer 4:6 and 6:1 where the word refers to the coming destruction from the north (note T. W. Overholst, *The Threat of Falsehood* [3 vols.; Naperville: Allenson, 1970], 3. 75. Thus, the pseudoprophets gave only superficial treatment ("Peace, Peace") to the impending national threat. Hillers, *Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets*, 64-66, points out that this imagery of the wound not being given adequate treatment is set

The second of these passages, 29:23 (note 23:14 also⁴³), charges two pseudoprophets with personal immorality. Jeremiah 29 records “the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon” (29:1). The exiles had contented themselves that they were quite well equipped with prophetic sources in Babylon (29:15⁴⁴), two of these prophets being Ahab and Zedekiah (29:21). These false prophets, though in exile, evidently had been declaring the perpetuity of the nation as indicated by the continued existence of the temple and the Davidic throne.

Ahab and Zedekiah, says the letter, will face death by the hand of the Babylonian king (29:21). This slaying will take the form of roasting in the fire and will form the basis of a curse-form among the exiles (29:22).⁴⁵ The reason cited⁴⁶ for their judgment is that “they have acted foolishly in Israel and have committed adultery with their neighbors’ wives, and have spoken words in My name falsely” (29:23). Clearly, personal immorality is the charge against these two false prophets. Such looseness indicates that at least these prophets’ level of morality was not consistent with OT norms and may be suggestive of a theological perspective from which such practices could arise (perhaps confidence in Jerusalem’s existence apart from adherence to the moral obligations of Yahweh’s treaty with the nation).

Encouragement of evil. Not unexpectedly, the pseudoprophets are charged with the promotion of evil among the members of the

in treaty terminology (curse form). The wounds’ incurable nature can be treated only by the healing produced by conformity to treaty obligations in this case.

⁴³To be sure, 23:14 charges pseudoprophets with “the committing of adultery.” Laetsch, *Bible Commentary: Jeremiah*, 198, concludes that the adultery here is of a personal moral nature. However, Overolt, *The Threat of Falsehood*, 54–55, suggests that the reference here may be to adultery as national apostasy, thus seeing the reference to Sodom and Gomorrah as one of judgment. Overolt’s point may be borne out by the limited usage of שׁׂרְוֹתָה, “a horrible thing” (Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 380, suggests two roots, שׁׂרְוֹתָה and שׁׂרְוֹתָרִי, together occurring a total of four times) in the OT. Each of these passages could be interpreted in terms of national apostasy.

⁴⁴The verses that follow, 29:16–20, are not included in the LXX. In this light note the discussion of Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 249.

⁴⁵Much earlier, The Code of Hammurabi stipulated the punishment of burning for one who was involved in immorality. According to Pritchard (ed.), *ANET*, 172, law 157 reads: “If a seignor has lain in the bosom of his mother after (the death of) his father, they shall burn both of them,” the word for burning being *iqalu²ušunuti* from *qalū*. Conceivably, use of fire for punishment of adultery was practiced by the Babylonians much later. Compare Deut 22:22 as the OT pattern.

⁴⁶Jer 29:33 uses the expression אָשֶׁר יְמִין with a following verb (יָשַׁע) in the perfect to indicate cause or reason; note, GKC 318, n. 1.

covenanted people. Two chapters (23 and 29) in Jeremiah clearly make this point, the primary section occurring in 23:11ff. In this passage false prophets are accused of strengthening “the hands of evildoers, so that no one has turned back from his wickedness” (23:14). This was possible because of the position of leadership held by these prophets. Out of the circle⁴⁷ of the false prophets, ungodliness⁴⁸ had “gone forth into all the land” (23:15). This was accomplished partially at least by their promotion of the continuing presence of the temple as a tenet in their theology, requiring in the process promotion of idolatry (23:11 in comparison with 7:30-31 and 32:34). In fact, they had taken the lead in such, indicated by the use of the term שׁוֹשִׁים (from יָשַׁם — “put, set, place”) in 32:34. The word “they” in v 34 refers to those enumerated in v 32. In light of this promotion of evil it is not surprising that Shemaiah is judged, according to 29:32, for preaching “rebellion against the Lord.”

From the personal corruption of the false prophets one would expect corruption to be promoted among the people. Surprisingly the very object which these prophets used as a leading point in their theology (the temple) is the very channel through which further corruption and idolatry is promoted.

Confidence. A third leading trait of false prophets in Jeremiah’s day was that of confidence. This trait is suggested by 23:31-32. Verse 31 suggests that these prophets took (“use”, cf. הַלְקָחִים) their tongues and uttered oracles. *They* took the oracular initiative; they did not have words put in their mouths by Yahweh. The fact that the word “take” is a participle may indicate repeated orations, emphasizing their readiness for opportunities to ejaculate their supposed divine words. This eagerness to prophesy is further indicated in 23:32 by the description of them as those who made “reckless boasting.” The term here is וּבְפִתְחוֹתֶם, indicating “loose talk, boastful tales.”⁴⁹ The picture which emerges from these notes is that pseudoprophets were seeking opportunities to speak and readily boasted of their ideas. This, added

⁴⁷This idea is suggested in 23:15 by the use of מִאֵת מִן (מִאֵת מִן) which originally signified “separation” which “naturally derived on the one hand the sense of (*taken*) from among . . .” (note GKC, § 119vw).

⁴⁸The word “ungodliness” (NASB, “pollution”) is בְּגָדָה, the verbal form being employed in Jer 23:11 to describe the priests and prophets. The root גָּדָה may have several cognates such as the Ugaritic *hnp* and *hanâpu* occurring once in the Amarna literature. Each connotes something of a haughty impiety. Note C. H. Gordon, *UT*, 403.

⁴⁹While this term is problematic, Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, 291, does suggest this meaning. Note also the reference to this term by J. Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968) 333, n. 261.

to their personal immorality and promotion of such, produces a volatile combination.

Compatibility with the populace. Jer 32:31-35 (cf. 5:31) suggests this. Admittedly, this reference is a generalization about the religious decline of the nation over a period of time (32:31). The results of their spiritual decline are briefly catalogued with little explanation (32:33-35). However, what is informative about this passage is its recognition that both the populace and the leaders (including prophets) were involved in this decline. This may be taken to imply that there existed a level of compatibility between the theological perspective of the populace and that of the false prophets. The same compatibility may be indicated as well by the numerous correspondences between these prophets and the people (such as their mutual moral decline). This trait alone is sobering in light of the religious ideas of the populace as previously described. When, however, this characteristic is added to the above, the magnitude of opposition to the true prophets becomes apparent.

Furthermore, the compatibility of pseudoprophets and populace may indicate that on occasion these prophets "stole" ideas from the populace and incorporated them in their oracles and that the people may have taken, of course, their religious ideas from the prophets. This exchange of ideas would create solidarity of opposition that would make Jeremiah's ministry most difficult.

Ineffectiveness. While the false prophets were confident and boastful, no doubt encouraged by the acceptance of the populace, they were nonetheless ineffective. This may, in fact, be their primary trait. Several indications suggest this idea (note 4:9; 5:13; 6:14). The leading indication is the repeated reference to these men as prophets of deceit and falsehood (5:31⁵⁰; 8:10; 14:14; 20:6⁵¹; 23:14; 23:32; 27:10; 27:14; 27:16; 28:15). In each of these references the term בָּבֶל is used in connection with the pseudoprophets. This term is found through-

⁵⁰On the understanding of the parallelism in this verse, W. L. Holladay, "'The Priests Scrape Out On Their Hands,' Jeremiah V 31," *VT* 15 (1965) 111-13 suggests that the translation of the first part of the verse might best be read: "The prophets have prophesied falsely, and the priests deconsecrate themselves," based on his interpretation of מְלָא דַי as technical terminology employed in the consecration of a priest.

⁵¹There is disagreement over the status of Pashur as prophet. E. W. Nicholson, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1-25* (Cambridge Bible Commentary on The New English Bible; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1963) 167, suggests that Pashur is not a prophet while Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 187, suggests that he is. The comment of Jer 20:6 would tend to support Naegelsbach. For some help in understanding the renaming of Pashur see W. L. Holladay, "The Covenant With the Patriarchs Overturned: Jeremiah's Intention In 'Terror On Every Side' (Jer. 20:1-6)," *JBL* 91 (1972) 305-20 and D. L. Christensen, "Terror on Every Side" In Jeremiah," *JBL* 92 (1973) 498-502.

out the OT but is much more frequent in Jeremiah.⁵² This calls for special attention to the term.⁵³

The term means “deceit, falsehood.”⁵⁴ However, very often the term is set in a legal context. If such is the case, one would expect Jeremiah to employ the term within its legal setting and perhaps build upon and enlarge it.⁵⁵ This is especially important in light of Jeremiah’s self-analysis that he is always indicting and accusing his people (note בַּגְנָה, 15:10).⁵⁶ Jeremiah employs this legal term as a description of the *ineffectiveness* of the pseudoprophet analysis that Jerusalem will not fall to foreign enemies.⁵⁷ The false prophets claim, “all is well,” but the actual events are to the contrary. Their words do not have power to effect events as they predict (cf. 14:14-15; 27:10; 27:14-17). Certainly the words of pseudoprophets were prevarications but they were also marked by ineffectiveness, lack of power to achieve the predicted outcome.

The message of the pseudoprophets glossed over the real issue, that of obedience to covenant stipulations (23:13-22 and 7:3ff.). Because they did, these words, when trusted in, resulted in the actual forfeiture of Jerusalem’s security. These prophets “counselled a course of action diametrically opposed to that which would have been necessary to avoid the coming destruction of the city, temple and land.”⁵⁸ While their perspective allowed them to pronounce security, it was a security built on the wrong basis. Rather than building on Yahweh’s covenant stipulations (cf. 23:19-22 with Deuteronomy 28 and especially Deut 29:19), they built their security only upon the hopes attached to the Davidic throne (2 Sam 7:13ff. in comparison with Ps 89:30-37) and thus to the continuance of the place of David’s

⁵² According to this writer’s count, the term in all forms occurs 113 times in the OT and 34 times in Jeremiah alone. Note S. Mandelkern, *Veteris Testimenti Concordantiae* (Graz: Akademische, 1955) 1232-33.

⁵³ So Overholt, *The Threat of Falsehood*, 1.

⁵⁴ See Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, 383, and BDB 1055. The root בְּגַנֵּה has several cognates (Arabic, Syriac, Aramaic, and Assyrian). Gordon, *UT*, 494 does list, though does not define, a suggested root šqr (no. 2475) in Ugaritic.

⁵⁵ Note the discussion of Overholt, *The Threat of Falsehood*, 76ff. He says: “We might expect that in the process of employing the noun šefer as one of the important concepts in his theological vocabulary, Jeremiah would not lose sight of the predominant legal sense in which the term was usually employed, but would rather build upon and enlarge it” (*ibid.*, 91).

⁵⁶ For discussion of this point see J. Bright, “A Prophet’s Lament and Its Answer, Jeremiah 15:10-21,” *Int* 28 (1974) 59-74.

⁵⁷ Overholt, *The Threat of Falsehood*, 92.

⁵⁸ Ibid. An interesting study is also involved in Yahweh’s usage of טוֹב and רֵעֶה in connection with the false prophets, 22:13-17 and 23:17, for example. Note also the contrast between Isa 55:11 (Yahweh’s word is not empty, void — קַמְנִי) and the futility (הַבָּל) to which the false prophets’ words lead, see Renner, “False and True Prophecy,” 97.

throne, Jerusalem. Their view left no room for obedience to the demands of the Mosaic treaty.

Pseudoprophet quotations. The sources for discussion here are 2:26-27; 6:14; 8:11; 14:13; 23:17; 26:8, 9, 11; 27:9, 14, 16; 28:2-4, 11; 29:24; and 37:19 (23:25 was previously discussed⁵⁹). The first of these references suggests the contradictory thought pattern of the people and false prophets; they served other gods but imagined that in times of distress this practice would not keep Yahweh from responding to their cry.⁶⁰ Based on the other references, the following formulation seems to be legitimate.

The leading claim of the pseudoprophets was “Peace! Peace!” (6:14; 8:11) and that the people would have “peace” (14:13; 23:17). In the case of 6:14 and 8:11 the “peace” promised by the false prophets is set in the context of treaty terminology.⁶¹ In the face of breach of the Mosaic Covenant they proclaimed the general welfare of the people, thus promoting the notion of security.⁶² They seemingly understood that covenant breach had little to do with welfare or the lack of it. Jer 23:17 presents this very picture. Those who despised Yahweh and walked in obstinate rebellion against him were told by the pseudoprophets, “You will have peace . . . Calamity will not come upon you.” On this issue of a non-calamitous future these prophets laid particular stress: “You will not see the sword nor will you have famine, but I will give you lasting peace in this place” (14:13). The words “lasting peace” (literally, “peace of truth,” *שָׁלוֹם אֲמָתָה*) emphasize that this promised peace was an assured, steadfast, predictable outcome.⁶³ All this evidently was uttered under the menacing threat of drought (14:1).

From these observations the theological formulation of pseudoprophets was that the welfare of the people was assured, in spite of obvious covenant infractions and menacing threats (for example, drought and removal of temple vessels). The other quotations of false prophets all fit this mold. In spite of continuing disobedience and increasing international threats against security, they claimed that no calamity, sword, or famine will interrupt (23:17). The people will not serve the king of Babylon and he will not come against them (27:9,

⁵⁹ See p. 87.

⁶⁰ Keil, *The Prophecies of Jeremiah*, 68-69, points out that this reference is a generalization about all periods of the nation’s history and that, therefore, the reference to “Israel” is a reference to the entire nation, not just the ten northern tribes.

⁶¹ See the discussion on p. 89, n. 42. On the issue of covenant confession on the part of the people see Rust, *Covenant and Hope*, 99-105.

⁶² The employment of the term *שָׁלוֹם* is to be understood in the wider Ancient Near Eastern meaning of a “settled well-being.” Note as an example the use of the Akkadian cognate *šalāmu*.

⁶³ Cf. Keil, *The Prophecies of Jeremiah*, 249; von Orelli, *The Prophecies of Jeremiah*, 122; Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 149.

14; 37:19). Even the setback to security suffered in 597 B.C. will soon be rectified, they claimed (27:16; 28:2-4, 11). On these bases they rejected Jeremiah's oracles against Jerusalem's security and concerning a short exile (26:8-11; 29:24).

Of special importance among the many quotations is that from the mouth of Hananiah in chap. 28. He predicts the return of two items that may symbolize the essence of his theology — the temple vessels and the former king. The return of these seemed to mean for him the breaking of the yoke of the king of Babylon and the continuing security of the capital of the Southern Kingdom. That he should cite these two items would imply that the proclamation of security required the existence of the temple and the presence of continuing kingship. Putting together these ideas with other quotations, it appears that the factors which supported a *Peace Theology* were the temple and the dynasty. These components became a "Para-Covenantal" theology built on dynastic and temple hopes.

Jeremiah also spoke a "Covenant Theology" based on the blessings and curses of the Mosaic treaty. Certainly Jeremiah also knew that the nation possessed a secure future (cf. 33:6-9) but this did not blind him to the stipulations of the covenant.

The fact that both proclaimed a theology built on covenants made the judgmental nature of Jeremiah's word all the more unacceptable. Pseudoprophets had prooftexts too! This pictures all too clearly the insidious nature of falsehood and clearly implies a number of current-day applications.

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

The theology of the pseudoprophets in Jeremiah may be described as a "Para-Covenantal" theology built on the hopes attached to the temple⁶⁴ and the dynasty. This is in basic conformity with the religious ideas held by the populace. Pseudoprophets and the populace encouraged each other and together rejected the theology of Jeremiah.

This "Para-Covenantal" theology (originating in a mixture of claimed dreams and Yahweh's words) was built on the assumption that Jerusalem's existence was without condition. Therefore, the only realistic proclamation of such theology was peace. Furthermore, Mosaic Covenant infractions were really of no consequence in this theology. This theology, distorted as it was, could exist alongside rebellion against Yahweh's demands. Given the perspective of pseudoprophetic theology with its attendant prooftexts, Jeremiah gained little hearing.

⁶⁴An interesting interpretation of the importance of the temple vessels in the theological formulations of the people is given by P. R. Ackroyd, "The Temple Vessels — A Continuity Theme," *Studies in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (SVT 23; Leiden: Brill, 1972) 166ff.; note especially 175-77.

Practically speaking, the appeal of this false theology was its approximation to certain elements in Yahweh's covenantal dealings with his people. Because it approximated correct theology, its results were all the more devastating. The pseudoprophets spoke of Yahweh's work and will partially, not fully. Their theological distortion was primarily in not speaking Yahweh's demands; they spoke only of certain promises.

Present-day parallels may be seen among those who speak part of the counsel of God and who, by not speaking all of it, have not really spoken it at all. These same characteristics are found among those whose "words" sound somehow orthodox but whose content behind those words is ominously unorthodox.

This study of Jeremiah brings to the surface several points worthy of note. One is that understanding carefully the nature of the book requires understanding the plentiful material on pseudoprophets. Material so common to a corpus of literature must be studied seriously to aid in interpreting the book. The relative absence of writing on pseudoprophets in Jeremiah undoubtedly impoverishes a worthy understanding of the book.

Further, this canonical material on pseudoprophets furnishes at least a two-fold warning and a godly example. The two-fold warning is a warning to the one who speaks and the one who hears God's revelation. The one who speaks the revelation (in any age) must speak all of it, not just a part. He is warned that the desire to be heard and followed is not the end of speaking the revelation. The end is speaking the particulars of God's Word fully, clearly in terms of the whole (the very context in which God gave meaning to the particulars).⁶⁵ As well, there is due warning for those who hear the revelation. The hearer must want to hear the whole of the matter, not just those parts that justify his present theological ideas and their subsequent activities. And he must know the revelation adequately enough to know when the whole has *not* been spoken. Too commonly the Church has been plagued by speakers whose perversion is to speak the revelation only in part and hearers who prefer only a part or who do not know that only a part has been spoken.

But just as surely this study highlights the sterling example of Jeremiah who spoke faithfully and fully the whole of Yahweh's counsel, spoke it whatever the consequence. His example encourages those who measure success by how fully and faithfully they have spoken the Word of the living God, not simply by how pleasant are the consequences that result from speaking.

⁶⁵ So S. J. De Vries, *Prophet Against Prophet* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 148, observes concerning OT false and true prophets: "The basic conflict is always between covenant integrity and political opportunism."

PROJECT GRAMCORD: A REPORT

JAMES A. BOYER

A major project in the field of New Testament Greek grammar and syntactical studies is under way and right now is completing its first major goal.

For many years I have felt the need for a new tool for Greek exegesis, a concordance which will do for the study of syntactical constructions what a word concordance does for the study of word meanings. When a student of the NT wants to know the true meaning of a word, he goes to a concordance, finds all the places in the NT where that word occurs, and then studies its usage in all those places (a lexicon or dictionary merely reflects the results of some other scholar's study of such usage). It is obvious that language includes more than words; it includes words in syntactical relationships. And it is just as important to study the usage of these "grammatical constructions" as it is to study the separated words. But thus far it has been exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to find the other places in the NT where the same construction occurs. The grammars discuss some constructions and give some examples, but not complete lists. We need a new tool.

But such a work would be so huge and the task of preparing it so great as to be almost impossible — at least until the coming of computers. I began to inquire into the possibilities of using this mechanical means to lessen the work and speed up the process. Of course, much work is being done in using computers for the study of languages, but none even approaches the sophistication needed for this program. About three years ago, the Lord brought to me (I firmly believe it was His doing) a young man who was interested in Greek and an expert computer programmer, Mr. Paul Miller.

Mr. Miller was then a student at Indiana University, majoring in Greek and Religious Studies, and also pursuing extensive studies in computer programming and data structures. He has since graduated with high honors and has been serving as programming consultant and lecturer in Computer Science at Indiana University. He has received national recognition through papers presented at both theological and computer science conferences, and a number of published articles in the field. This year he begins his work toward a Master of Arts in New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

The first step in the program was to get the syntactical information ready in a form which could be stored in a computer data base from which it could be drawn for the grammatical concordances. This involved the morphological analysis and identification of every word in the NT together with some functional description as well. Even in this work, computer programs were devised to do much of the work, leaving only the choice between alternate possibilities to manual editing. All verbs were completely parsed, all nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and participles were identified by gender, number, case, and in the case of pronouns, further functional classification. Prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions, and particles also were to some degree functionally identified. The entire NT is now completed through this first stage.

As the work progressed, it became obvious that such a collection of information would itself be a useful tool. Unbound computer-prepared print-outs of the Grammatical Directory were made available to students and the response was very encouraging. As a result, we are presently investigating the publication of the whole data-base for the entire NT. It will be approximately the size of a large lexicon.

Now, to consider the possibilities of the larger and ultimate goal of the project, The Grammatical Concordance. Some examples may illustrate the potential usefulness of the tool. A frequently expressed misconception is that first-class conditions (*ei* with the indicative mood) indicate that the condition expressed is really true, and therefore, that they should be translated "since" rather than "if." But when the places in the NT where this construction occurs are examined, it is clear that such is totally false. (Look at Matt 12:27, John 10:37, 1 Cor 15:14; try reading them "since"; there are dozens of other examples like these.) First-class conditions do *not* express states which are true; they indicate that the result is *just as true* as the condition.

Can the interpretive problem in Rom 1:4 be solved by taking the word for "the dead" as ablative? English versions translate "from the dead," which is an ablative sense. But the Greek is rendered literally "resurrection of the dead (ones, pl.)," a genitive idea. When we study concordantly the usage with "resurrection," we find that the genitive expresses "the one(s) raised," while the ablative idea of "out from among the dead ones" is expressed in Greek by a preposition (*ἐκ*). So the verse is not referring solely to Christ's own resurrection, but to the resurrection of dead ones.

A common expression of time in NT Greek is made up of a preposition (*ἐν*) with the articular infinitive. Usually, the infinitive is in the present tense and the expression denotes "in the process of a certain action," or, "while a certain thing was happening, or continuing." But sometimes the aorist infinitive is used. What effect does that

have on the meaning? How can one tell? The answer obviously is to compare all the places where the construction (èv + article + aorist infinitive) occurs to see what sense the context demands. But where are these examples to be found? One might find some of them in a grammar, or one can start hunting through all the places where èv occurs in the NT (there are 2,767 of them!). With the grammatical concordance one can connect to the computer by phone and address a couple of commands to it; it then will search through the entire NT data base for these three precise conditions (the search takes about two minutes) and in a few more minutes one can have a complete printed list from which to continue study.

The magnitude and the nature of the information thus available is limited only by the ingenuity of the scholar in formulating the proper instruction to the computer.

By the very nature of the case, such a Grammatical Concordance will never be published as a "book"; rather it will be an exhaustless well of new information from which one can draw whatever and however much he needs. Its possible uses will be almost limitless, answering specific questions scholars may ask about syntactical structures on the phrase level, the clause level, the sentence level, or beyond. The information would be available by mail or phone at a center for the service. These details have not yet been worked out, but plans to make the information available on a wider basis are under way.



BOOK REVIEWS

The Book of Leviticus, by G. J. Wenham. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979. Pp. xiii + 362. \$9.95.

The publication of any commentary on Leviticus is an event in OT studies and is gratefully received by those interested in that field. This volume is unique in that it is the first major commentary by a conservative on this book since the days of Keil and Delitzsch. For this reason, we are doubly grateful both to the author and the publisher for the present volume. Wenham states that "Leviticus used to be the first book that Jewish children studied in the synagogue. In the modern church, it tends to be the last part of the Bible anyone looks at seriously." Perhaps this volume will help to redress that imbalance.

The format of the book is largely controlled by three topical goals. First, Wenham desires to integrate pertinent material from the Ancient Near East into the explanation of the book (both as a whole and as a part). Second, he attempts to utilize (whenever usable) the work of modern social anthropologists. Third, he makes substantial use of literary criticism (not to be confused with source criticism). The simple reading of these comments might mislead the reader concerning the real character of the book, however. Its real emphasis may be discerned by noting his attitude to source and historical criticism: "Detailed discussion of these issues has been deliberately eschewed in this commentary. It seemed more important to establish the plain meaning of the text and its theological message than to pursue conjectures about how the book was written." This emphasis is reflected on every page of the book and probably explains why he is noncommittal on Mosaic authorship (p. 13). It is the meaning he regards as important, not by whom/when it might have been written.

The introduction (pp. 1-36) includes the usual subjects, but the majority of the space is devoted to the discussion of four theological cruxes: the presence of God, holiness, the role of sacrifice, and the Sinai Covenant. These are skilfully treated, although the approach is unfortunate for someone in a hurry. For example, this is certainly the best presentation of sacrifice now in print. Yet, the only way to grasp the issues which the book handles is to read the entire book, since the introductory section on Sacrifice is incomplete. This is, of course, probably unavoidable if the form of a commentary is to be maintained. Still, I would have liked to have seen much greater space given to articulating the theology of sacrifice in the introduction.

The text itself is characterized by a consistent methodology. Each section of Leviticus is discussed by first considering the structure of the section. In

my view, this is one of the best features of the commentary. He is aware, for example, that chaps. 8-10 are a “literary triptych, i.e., three pictures designed to hang together so as to illuminate and enrich the meaning of each other.” This literary technique, when understood, makes the order and, therefore, meaning of these three chapters come alive. (See p. 133 for his excellent demonstration.) Following the section on structure, the author then gives an exposition of the text. Frequently, he here introduces a discussion of a topic of importance located in that section; thus, pp. 51-63 (covering chap. 1) discuss the topic of burnt offering. Each literary unit is then closed with a brief discussion of that unit/topic in light of the NT.

The real strength of the book, of course, is that it gives us a twentieth century analysis of some of the most important and perplexing topics in the OT. Wenham does not feel that it is necessary to choose between the two major possible meanings for the burnt offering. Does the animal die in the worshipper's place as his substitute, or does it receive the death penalty because of the sin transferred by the laying on of hands? To Wenham, it is not necessary to decide between these, “They both fit in well with sacrifices making atonement” (p. 62). Atonement (**כֹּפֶר**) is paying a ransom, which he cautions must not be seen in light of English connotations. “But in the OT the payment of a ransom was a very humane act. It allowed a guilty person to be punished with a lesser penalty than he deserved.” He rightly rejects the concept of “cover” for **כֹּפֶר**.

Wenham carefully avoids the typological approach which has so vitiated the utility of the older commentators. This has not, however, limited the use of Leviticus for the Christian. On the contrary, it has actually established the timelessness of the book in that it shows to all succeeding generations the great themes of holiness, sin, and atonement from the perspective of a holy God. In this respect, it might be argued that attempts to find “types” actually destroyed interest (note the long drought of commentaries), since they insisted on its relevance only within a Christian setting.

Wenham offers a useful understanding of the reasoning behind the issue of ritual cleanliness. Anything is unclean that does not mirror order and perfection. Birds must have two wings for flying; fish, fins and scales to swim; land animals, hoofs to run with. “Insects which fly but which have many legs are unclean, whereas locusts, which have wings and only two hopping legs are clean” (p. 169). In this respect, the animal world symbolizes the human world; anything that is not normal is unclean. This method is easily preferable to the alternatives, but it does not answer all the problems. For example, Wenham states that insects which swarm are unclean since this violates order because they have no clear-cut motion peculiar to their sphere of life. Yet, locusts are clean and they clearly swarm — even though their primary function was to hop about. Furthermore, it might be difficult to explain how “swarmers” (**צְרַעַת**) in Gen 1:20 could be pronounced “good” if they were already violating normality.

As a last point, I would like to establish a call for a second volume. My complaint is not with the book; rather, it is with what is not written. To arrive at the meaning of a text is, indeed, the most admirable task of the interpreter. Yet, Leviticus 25 (Jubilee) is an example of the need for expanded discussion within both a historical and intra-biblical perspective. A much

more in-depth discussion of *mīšarum/andurārum* in the Ancient Near East would greatly help the discussion. Did the practice of debt cancelation cease with the end of the Old Babylonian period?* What is the nature of Zedekiah's release (Jer 34:8ff.) and how does this fit with the termination of the practice in Mesopotamia nearly a thousand years earlier? What might these questions (and many others) contribute to arriving at a date for Leviticus 25 in particular and the book in general?

On the whole, it is a joy to have the book in print and it will in all likelihood serve at least another generation. The publishers are to be commended both for the noble series (NICOT) and the reasonable price.

*Recently, some strong challenges have arisen to attempts to connect the Jubilee with similar practices in the Old Babylonian period. N. P. Lemche, "The Manumission of Slaves — the Fallow Year — the Sabbatical Year — the *Jobel* Year," *VT* 26 (1976) 38-59; also by the same author "*Andurarum and Misharum*: Comments on the Problem of Social Edicts and Their Application in the Ancient Near East," *JNES* 38 (1979) 11-22. Lemche is not alone in his criticisms. If a link can be made connecting Jubilee with *mīšarum*, an early (ca. 1500 B.C.) date for Leviticus 25 would fit well indeed.

DONALD L. FOWLER

The Bible and Recent Archaeology, by Dame Kathleen Mary Kenyon. Atlanta: John Knox, 1978. Pp. 105. \$6.50. Paper.

It is a pleasure to read a popular treatise on biblical archaeology from the hand of so eminent an authority as the late Kathleen M. Kenyon. The reader will recognize the meticulous touch of a true professional who is also able to convey the excitement and the dynamic of archaeology. Although barely 100 pages, it is an attractive and useful volume, "intended for a general readership," as she emphatically states in the introduction. There are fine illustrations as well as a bibliography and index. Unfortunately, the book was printed with such narrow inner margins that one almost has to break the spine to read the text.

The book's six chapters cover the scope of biblical history from the patriarchs through the NT, relating major events and personalities to the findings of archaeology. One will read, for example, of Jebusite walls at Jerusalem, of Late Bronze Age temples at Lachish, of "Solomon's stables," of Herodian architecture in Jerusalem, and of the fortress at Masada. The emphasis, as one might expect from Kenyon, is upon Palestine, with only occasional reference to Mesopotamia and Egypt. Most of the major digs in Palestine are discussed with disproportionate space devoted to her own digs.

The word "recent" in the title must be taken rather loosely by the person who has kept in touch with biblical archaeology. Kenyon states that by recent she means "since the Second World War." Indeed fifteen percent of the illustrations in the book are of her own dig at Jericho, which took place about a quarter of a century ago; in fact, at least fifteen of the photos were also published in her *Digging Up Jericho* in 1957. One must not think that reading this book will apprise one of all the latest finds in Palestine and Transjordan. Some major discoveries are reported, such as the tablets at Ebla

and the structures at the southwest corner of the Temple platform in Jerusalem. But there is no mention of the Philistine temple uncovered at Tel Qasile, or the horned altar found at Beer-sheba, or the excavations at Deir 'Alla, for example.

Kenyon chose the title as a deliberate echo of her father's famous book, *The Bible and Archaeology* (1940). The emphases of the two books are quite different, since the earlier volume concentrates heavily on the lands beyond Palestine. Also, it is obvious that the father is more the biblical scholar while the daughter is more the professional archaeologist. Yet there are some interesting similarities. Both give a thumbnail sketch of the documentary hypothesis of the Pentateuch in their opening chapter as a foundation for their discussions of the Patriarchs. Each reaches a similar conclusion on the archaeology of et-Tell even though a major dig took place there between their writings. Sir Frederic: The evidence from 'Ai is "one indication of archaeology which appears less favorable to the trustworthiness of the Book of Joshua." Dame Kathleen: ". . . the probability is that there is no historicity in the story of the attack on 'Ai."

Perhaps because of her focus on biblical history Kenyon seems more negative here than in previous writings. "All reputable modern scholars accept as certain that the Pentateuch . . . only acquired the form in which [it has] reached us by a very long process of the combination of oral and tribal records, of editing and redactions" (p. 7). "The great interval in time before they were put in writing makes it certain that [the Patriarchal tales] do not constitute an historical record" (p. 23). "The one thing that is certainly out of the question . . . is the chronology given in the Bible" (p. 30). "There was no route [of the Exodus and] it is futile to try and trace it" (p. 33). Kenyon would suggest not only two exodus, but claims that further fragmentation is necessary to reconcile the conflicting evidence in the Bible and in archaeology (p. 43).

But these points of controversy by no means dominate the book. For the one who can read with a discerning eye this is a most enjoyable book and one that will demonstrate again the enormous contribution of archaeology to biblical studies.

ROBERT IBACH, JR.

Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture, by Brevard S. Childs. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979. Pp. 688. \$28.50.

As someone has said, reading a book on OT Introduction is like reading a telephone directory — a somewhat less than scintillating task. The typical Introduction includes a survey of the history of the discipline of OT study, discussion of various topics relating to the entire OT (such as textual criticism, literary genres, and the like), and introduction to each book of the OT, (including a survey of various scholarly opinions on each book, problems of date, authorship, and so forth). The normal result is usually not a coffee-table tome.

In this case, however, Childs has produced a *magnum opus* which is not only readable; it is difficult to put down! While it is not exactly the kind of book one will find on a coffee table — not even the dust jacket has the requisite photograph — it will be the subject of much discussion (perhaps over coffee) in seminary and college lounges. Pastors ought not to neglect it, either.

One senses in reading this book that Childs was moved to write it more as a polemic than as an introduction. A brief review of Childs' personal (in some respects, highly personal) approach is helpful in understanding this work. His earlier writings, particularly *Biblical Theology in Crisis*, reflect considerable dissatisfaction with the current status of biblical studies. Liberal OT scholars were immersed in various attempts to recover the original historical setting of the Bible, and fragmentation of the text into even smaller bits and pieces was the usual result of the methods — literary, form, redaction, and *religionsgeschichtliche* criticism — employed. On the other hand, conservatives convinced of the integrity of the OT text, generally refused to accept methodology developed by scholars they considered liberal because of the results they obtained. So they argued, often unheard, against their conclusions, primarily on a priori bases. Thus, they either claimed that the text as we have it does reflect accurately the original historical situations with no later modifications or reinterpretations, or conversely, ignored the original historical context entirely.

Childs rejects both the liberal and conservative approaches. He is convinced particularly that the one major consideration has been neglected in modern study, that of canon. For him, the context of all scripture is the canon, and the canonical shape is the key to both the meaning and authority of scripture. How the scripture, or an individual book, functioned in Judaism and/or in Christianity is for Childs the ultimate goal of research and the key to its interpretation. It is clear that Childs is dissatisfied with the gap between an atomizing liberal exegesis which has impoverished scripture through what he considers over-much attention to discovering the *original* setting and the real-life situation of the church today. At least in part, the problem is: how can one preach to the concerns of man today when the text is a pastiche of layers from different redactions, reuses, and reinterpretations?

All this is not to say that Childs totally rejects modern liberal methodology. Rather, he argues that it does not lead where the scholars think it will, that it is overly concerned with a historicizing methodology, and that it really cannot decipher all the layers of tradition and redaction. Rather, one should focus on the text *as we have it*, because it is only in the final form (i.e., of a book, or for that matter, the whole OT), that we really have *Scripture*. For Childs, all the constituent forms and collections posited by the scholars — oral tradition, collections of sermons, proverbs, or stories, etc. — cannot properly be labeled “scripture.” It was not until a book had received its canonical shape that it had authority, an authority which Childs links to the manner in which it spoke to the community where it reached canonical form and which cannot be separated from that final form. Thus, no section of a book can be said to be authoritative outside of the context of the larger work of which it is a part.

But beyond the issue of *authority*, which many of his compatriots would perhaps concede, Childs firmly believes that the only level of *meaning* worth exerting effort to investigate is that which the text had for the community where it reached canonical status. This contrasts sharply with the standard liberal methodology which sees multi-faceted levels of meaning corresponding to the supposed history of the development of the text.

An example casts the issues into sharp relief. Since the advent of rationalistic higher criticism, most liberals have insisted that the book of Isaiah cannot be attributed in its entirety to the Isaiah of the time of Hezekiah. At first the book was divided into two and later three (or more) parts, with the later sections attributed to an author or authors in the exilic period. The result is that in some commentary series different commentators are assigned to different sections of the book and their work appears in separate volumes (BKAT, etc.), as though separate books are being treated.

In his introduction to the book of Isaiah, Childs first surveys critical scholarship on each section of the book and then turns to an assessment of the results of scholarship. To do less than quote Childs would be a disservice:

Surely it would be a grave misunderstanding to disparage the contribution of this enormous effort by generations of critical scholars. . . . The statement can hardly be denied that modern research has brought a new philological, historical, and literary precision to bear which was unknown in the pre-critical period. . . .

Nevertheless, from the perspective of the community of faith and practice which confesses a special relationship to the Bible, the critical study of Isaiah has brought with it a whole new set of problems which have grown in size rather than diminished over the years. First of all, critical scholarship has atomized the book. . . . To speak of the message of the book as a whole has been seriously called into question. . . . Since it is no longer possible to determine precisely the historical background of large sections of Isaiah, hypotheses increase along with the disagreement among the experts (pp. 323-24).

After expressing his lack of belief in the ultimate value of traditional critical scholarship, Childs puts forth *his* solution; which can only be summarized. He argues against the dislocation of Isaiah 40-66 from 1-39. Never mind that it (for Childs) once had a separate existence. That independent status is irrecoverable and we must deal with the text as we have it. The attachment of chaps. 40-66 to the rest of the book is not accidental, but due to serious theological reflection which included an attempt to universalize the message of these oracles. By placing them with those of 8th-century Isaiah, they are in effect removed from their original historical setting and placed in one which made the message applicable to more than Isaiah's peers. In other words, Childs' argument is that it is precisely *because of* the minimizing of concrete historical situations in the latter part of Isaiah that the book has a function beyond its time. It is only really because of this that the synagogue and church can use this material.

The sharp disjunction between Childs and conservatives comes, of course, primarily in the area of the source of biblical authority. Conservatives find it in God, the ultimate author of scripture; Childs finds it in the relationship between text and the ancient community, basically a neo-orthodox approach. However, there are some clear points of contact between

Childs' approach and that of conservatives. One of the major ones is the insistence on the primacy of the text as we have it. The extent of the impact of this thesis can be seen in his approach to textual criticism: he argues that since the canonical shape of a book is primary, the task of textual criticism is to recover the text as accepted by the community. Childs identifies this as the Masoretic (Received) Text, and hence diminishes the importance of the LXX and other versions for OT textual criticism. Of course, the implication of this is that one need not be overly concerned about the relationship of the LXX to, for instance, the hellenized Jewish community, its use by Christians (and the NT), and later anti-Christian Jewish revisions. The problem, then, is to determine within *which* community and at what period the text becomes canonized. Here lies one of the major methodological problems with Childs' approach.

Because of Childs' commitment to the integrity of the text, there is much to be appreciated in this book. This reviewer found a number of promising insights into the theological messages of individual books, insights which may well be valid. Undoubtedly, these come from a keen mind turning to a consideration of a whole — not fragmented — text. His treatment of the place of Isaiah 36-39, the "historical" section of the book, for instance, is quite inviting, since it does weld the book into a theological unity, a rarity today.

There are also some cautions to be noted. The most significant one relates to an area discussed above, that of authority. Childs is no evangelical, and he does not find the scripture's authority in a divine source. Because he wants to find contemporary usefulness for scripture, he interprets it for the community of faith. The problem is that this detaches the meaning of the text from its historical moorings. Of course, conservatives have been guilty of this as well, either ignorantly or intentionally, when texts have been transported bodily from their historical and cultural settings to support a 20th-century dogma, without concern for their original intention. The proper method recognizes and understands the text *in its original context before attempting to extrapolate meaning for the modern world*. But it does not see a disjunction between the original meaning and its application today, or for that matter, between the meaning of a given text in OT times and its use and meaning in NT times, as does Childs. There is no difference for the evangelical between the "Old Testament" and "Scripture"; here, the phrase "the Old Testament as Scripture" is a tautology.

This is not to deny the value of the book. It is certainly the most interesting introduction to appear in perhaps the last hundred years. One need not agree with it to state that it is a stimulating, useful, and insightful work. Theological students and pastors alike will benefit from contact with the thesis of the book, as well as many individual suggestions. Even if no other reason exists for buying the book, excellent, current bibliographies at the beginning of each chapter are worth the price of the book, especially since they recognize the contributions of American scholarship, something lacking in the typical continental introductions.

Two physical characteristics detract from the overall impression. The price (\$28.50) is exorbitant for a book slightly under 700 pages. Second, the binding is such that the book will not lie open on the desk, requiring the use

of empty coffee mugs or the like (on both pages!) to hold it open; this is more than a small inconvenience, and it is hoped that the publisher will abandon this type of binding.

JAMES E. EISEN BRAUN

The Status of Women in the Middle Assyrian Period, by Claudio Sapori etti. Monographs on the Ancient Near East 2/1. Trans. by Beatrice Boltze-Jordan. Malibu, CA: Undena, 1979. Pp. 20. N.P.

This little monograph is an extremely well-written study of the position of women in the Middle Assyrian period in Assyria. The author's analysis of the texts is convincing and cautious. The picture drawn for the modern reader is that the Assyrian woman lived in a repressive (by modern standards) society. She appears to have had no choice in her marriage; indeed, love played no part in the making of a marriage. The position of the father was dominant in all affairs, economic and otherwise (until her marriage). The only economic protection for the bride was the *terhatu*, which was a wedding gift (commonly of tin, silver, or gold) from the father of the bride. It remained the possession of the bride should her husband divorce her. Apart from this it was nearly impossible for a woman to own anything. Only if her husband, any sons over ten years of age, her husband's brothers, her husband's father, or her own father had all died could she then own anything except the *terhatu* (which was commonly held in trust by her father). This certainly adds emphasis to the Jacob/Laban stories where Laban had consumed the purchase price of his daughters (Gen 31:15). Even by the standards of Middle Assyrian practices, the crime is one of truly great proportions.

Another interesting feature is that judicially the woman was under the domain of her husband. He had the right to fix penalty as well as determine what was an offense. Social and economic stratification was the by-word for ancient society. For example, there were several levels of status among women (free woman, widow, concubine, etc.). On the other hand, the status of women vis à vis men is often unequal. If, for example, a wife commits adultery, both she and her lover are to be executed (actually, it was up to the husband to determine penalty). However, an adulterous man is guilty only if he is aware that he is lying with a married woman. This has the effect of making the adulterous husband beyond guilt regarding his own wife.

Somewhat surprising is the observation that bigamy "was allowed only under special conditions, clearly defined by the laws." In this respect, Middle Assyrian culture seems to differ with that reflected in Genesis, where polygamy appears to be the norm.

The results of this monograph demonstrate in the main that Middle Assyrian social practice regarding the status of women does not compare well with that of the Bible. The legislation in Num 27:1-11 and 36:1-4 contrasts dramatically with that of Middle Assyria. In Israel, if a man died without a son as heir, landed properties were passed into the possession of the *daughters* of the marriage. If there were no daughters, the land diverted to the brother of the deceased; without a brother, the land went to his father's

brothers; without brothers, the land went to the nearest relative. This hierarchy totally reverses that of Middle Assyrian practices.

In general, then, it is clear that the social customs reflected in the Bible relate better to the Old Babylonian period (especially those of Genesis). On the other hand, this monograph offers many instructive points of comparison and could be recommended for anyone interested in the social world of the Bible.

DONALD L. FOWLER

The Identity of the New Testament Text, by Wilbur N. Pickering. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1977. Pp. 191 \$7.95.

Here is the first book-length polemic against the current text-critical methodology and defense of the Byzantine Text since Edward F. Hills' *The King James Version Defended* (Christian Research, 1956) that deserves serious consideration by biblical scholarship, despite the disclaimer of Gordon D. Fee (*WTJ* 41 [1979] 397-423). Another excellent work that is also available is H. A. Sturz's *The Byzantine Text-Type and New Testament Textual Criticism* (second syllabus edition; La Mirada, CA: Biola College Bookstore, 1972), although Sturz holds a more mediating position than does Pickering. As Pickering's title suggests, he is more concerned with past and current methodologies used in identifying the *best* Greek text of the NT rather than with a defense of the KJV translation *per se*. In this respect it is a better work than Hills' and from the standpoint of scholarship, it rises far above the several publications of the more fanatical coterie of KJV defenders.

Wilbur N. Pickering received the Th.M. degree from Dallas Theological Seminary in 1968 and is currently a candidate for the Ph.D. degree in linguistics at the University of Toronto. He has served as a Bible Translator and a translation consultant with Wycliffe Bible translators in Brazil, where he presently resides.

At least two previous noteworthy reviews of *The Identity of the New Testament Text* have already appeared — both by eminent Bible scholars, one favorable and the other definitely unfavorable. John W. Wenham (*EQ* 51 [1979] 50-51) unabashedly registers shock at Pickering's disclosures which indict the bankrupt Westcott-Hort theory and methodology still essentially used (although suspiciously and with modifications) by textual critics today. Wenham writes:

This is a shocking book — at least it delivered a shock to my system. It is not often that one reads a book which re-orientates one's whole approach to a subject, but that is what this has done for me. It is a frontal attack upon the Westcott and Hort theory of the N.T. Text, the general soundness of which I had accepted *without question for forty years* [italics mine]. Two or three years ago I had the first tricklings of doubt about it; then I chanced to read George Salmon's *Some Thoughts on the Textual Criticism of the N.T.* (1897), which increased the trickle to a stream; now with this book it has become a flood. . . . This is not an academic matter, for it affects the wording of the hundreds of

millions of scriptures which we are distributing across the globe. It is shocking to think that we may have been giving the world a bad text.

In contrast, the second review (by Gordon D. Fee) was quite negative. Fee, a professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and an esteemed textual critic, believes that the book "offers no serious challenge to textual studies." Fee's critique (*WTJ* 41 [1979] 397-423) is quite helpful and should be read along with Pickering's work.

Fee's reaction was to be expected. Almost all *qualified* textual critics (those who work constantly in the discipline), except Zane Hodges (Dallas Theological Seminary) and very few others, are so convinced (*as a presupposition!*) of the secondary importance of the Byzantine text-type (?) that they will not countenance any possibility of an essentially faulty methodology being employed in the science of biblical textual criticism today.

Qualified textual critics are extremely rare, and orthodox, conservative textual critics are rarer still. Consequently, textual critics often pontificate from ivory towers and the majority of Bible scholars, both liberal and conservative, by virtue of their own inexpertness in the science, are at the mercy of the critics' opinions. For this reason the Westcott-Hort theory and methodology have been accepted by most theologians. We might well be the worse for it.

Pickering has dared to challenge the *status quo* in textual criticism on its own grounds. He begins by assaulting the current "eclectic" method of NT textual criticism and its almost fanatic devotion to internal rather than external evidence which he regards as the major controlling factor on the textual scene today. The eclecticism which alarms Pickering is that which is essentially reduced to two rules: (1) Choose the reading that best fits the context; (2) choose the reading which best explains the other readings. In essence, these two principles are F. J. A. Hort's Intrinsic Probability and Transcriptional Probability principles respectively. Even those who employ such methodology acknowledge its subjectivity, which renders it highly suspect.

Most textual critics use this method today, even though they are wary of it. Pickering is particularly concerned (as is Fee) with the extravagances of G. D. Kilpatrick and J. K. Elliott, both thorough-going eclectacists, which are finding expression in such publications as *A Greek-English Diglot for the Use of Translators* issued by the British and Foreign Bible Societies (p. 23).

The genius of Pickering's approach is that he allows textual critics themselves to criticize their own methodology by citing the suspicions of such notables as Eldon Jay Epp, E. C. Colwell, Bruce Metzger, K. W. Clark, A. F. J. Klijn, F. G. Kenyon, Gunther Zuntz, and many others. Little wonder over the shock of Wenham! It should be noted that Fee is mistaken when he accuses Pickering of serious distortion by lumping Metzger, Epp, and Colwell together with Kilpatrick and Elliott. In fairness, Pickering does not lump them together but clearly delineates the distinction between their various degrees of eclecticism.

Much of this book is concerned with a detailed evaluation of the Westcott-Hort critical theory and, whether one agrees with Pickering or not, this in itself makes the book of great value to interested students who never

advanced beyond J. Harold Greenlee's very fine primer, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism* (Eerdmans, 1964).

The reader will be surprised to learn that the two most famous MSS, Codex B and Codex Σ (both regarded as our best uncial witnesses by textual critics), differ with each other well over 3,000 times in the *Gospels alone* (p. 51)! Again, it is small wonder that Pickering questions the certainty of our current critical texts.

Pickering challenges every major premise of the Westcott-Hort theory and attempts to debunk each one. First, Hort contended that the NT should be treated like any other piece of ancient literature and *assumed* (naively) that there were "no signs of deliberate falsification of the text for dogmatic purposes" (pp. 32, 41). Pickering appeals to Metzger, Colwell, Matthew Black, and H. H. Oliver to demonstrate that the majority of the variant readings in the NT *were* created for theological and dogmatic reasons (pp. 41-43). It should be noted, however, that none of these modern textual critics cites "falsification" or "malice" as the motivation behind variant readings. Pickering is forced to appeal to late (3-4th century A.D.) church fathers for this detail. Fee's lengthy discussion (*op. cit.*, pp. 405-15) of this whole issue, which contravenes Pickering, is excellent and should be read along with Pickering's section.

Second, Pickering demonstrates (conclusively to this reviewer) that Westcott and Hort *never* applied, as Hort claims, the genealogical method to NT MSS. Again, appeal is made to Colwell, who claimed that a method *not used*, or even capable of being used, actually "slew" the *Textus Receptus*. Hort's integrity, in view of this colossal falsehood, is very much in question.

Third, Pickering seriously questions whether or not "text-types" can even be distinguished and cites Parvis, Wikgren, Colwell, Zuntz, Klijn, and Hoskier, who all agree that the reconstruction of text-types of any kind is extremely doubtful. Evidently, modern classifications into text-types and families are more imaginative than real. One wonders why *eighty* percent of our MSS should be categorized into a family (Byzantine) that is regarded as inferior when the whole process of categorization is in doubt.

Fourth, Hort's claim against the *Textus Receptus* of conflate readings to prove its lateness and inferiority is thoroughly repudiated. Once again, Colwell, who refers to this as Hort's "Achilles heel," is summoned to back up Pickering's argument (p. 58).

Fifth, Hort's denial of the existence of "Syrian" (Byzantine) readings prior to Chrysostom is essentially demolished (pp. 62-77). Of interest to every student at this point in the argument will be the appeal to the monumental work of Edward Miller, posthumous editor to Dean Burgon, which has never really been answered. Miller amassed a staggering 86,489 patristic citations to prove the presence of readings of the Traditional Text in the writings of the Ante-Nicene Fathers. Miller demonstrated that the Ante-Nicene Fathers sided with the Traditional Text over Hort's "Neutral" and "Western" texts by a ratio of 2:1 and never dropped below an advantage ratio of 1.24:1 at any time. The noted F. G. Kenyon was never able to controvert Miller's findings.

Sixth, Pickering seriously challenges Hort's Intrinsic Probability theory (= shorter reading is the best reading) and his Transcriptional Probability

theory (= the more difficult reading is the best reading). B. H. Streeter, Leo Vaganay, and Kilpatrick all question Hort's two canons, and A. C. Clark apparently demonstrated that they could not be applied even to the classics (pp. 80-81). Fee (*op. cit.*, p. 409) places the burden back upon Pickering to advance better canons, based upon acceptable historical investigation, if Hort's canons are to be set aside.

Finally, Hort's *Lucianic Recension* theory is demolished under the testimony of Kenyon, Colwell, F. C. Grant, and Jacob Geerlings (pp. 88-89).

Pickering devotes Chapter 5 to his own theory of textual transmission. He sees the Majority Text "dominating the stream of transmission with a few individual witnesses going their idiosyncratic ways." This is a possibility which at least ought to be given a fair day in court by textual critics. It seems obvious that the present methodology has led to a dead-end as far as any ultimate certainty of the text is concerned. (Fee finds a real problem with Pickering's theory of transmission and essentially charges it to naiveté).

Strangely, Pickering's shortest chapter actually deals with identifying the text of the NT (chap. 7). Here he appeals to Burgon's seven "Notes of Truth" with slight modifications. His seven principles for determining the identity of the NT text are: (1) *antiquity*, because a serious candidate for an original reading should be old, perhaps earlier than A.D. 400; (2) *consent of witnesses*, because a serious candidate for an original reading should be attested by a majority of *independent* witnesses; (3) *variety of evidence*, because a serious candidate for an original reading should be attested to by a wide variety of readings; (4) *continuity*, because a serious candidate for an original reading should be attested to throughout the ages of transmission, from beginning to end; (5) *respectability of witnesses*, because any serious candidate for a witness to the original should have a high credibility factor (Hoskier has demonstrated the low respectability quotient of B and \aleph); (6) *evidence of the entire passage* being set within a context of proven credibility; and (7) *internal consideration*, because a serious candidate for an original reading should reflect grammatical, logical, geographical, and scientific reasonableness. Pickering rightly wonders why these canons of truth have not been followed more closely in the science of textual criticism.

No doubt the book has flaws which a qualified textual critic (such as Fee) might detect. Pickering seems somewhat contradictory in his theory of transmission, at one time defending an essential purity of transmission (pp. 100ff.) and at another time asserting much intentional corruption (pp. 41-42). Again, as mentioned previously, Gordon Fee's full critique of this book should be read along with the book so that the more technical issues can be viewed from two perspectives.

Whatever its weaknesses, the book presents an excellent refutation of an almost blind acceptance of current text-critical methodologies and opinions which still fall somewhere within the framework of the bankrupt Westcott-Hort theory. Every serious student of the Greek NT should be fully aware of every *fact* and *opinion* expressed in this work. Pickering is to be commended, whether or not one agrees with him.

Perhaps the day will come when capable textual critics (especially among orthodox scholars) finally, after 100 years, will give full consideration to a

total overhaul of current methodology and give the Majority Text its rightful place in the science.

JOHN A. SPROULE

The Celtic World, by Barry Cunliffe. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979. Pp. 224. \$39.95.

This spectacular volume is a joy to read. While it belongs to that genre known as "coffee table" books, it is certainly more than just another pretty face. Cunliffe is a fine classical scholar, a fact which has made this synthesis valuable rather than superfluous. The question can rightly be asked on nearly any subject today, "What! Not another book on...!" While no new ground is broken here, its reason for existence has, I think, been established in its contents. One may note that this is not just a history of the Celts; rather, it gives a lucid discussion (without scholarly jargon) on every facet of Celtic life. One of its most attractive features to the reviewer is that it provides a generous measure of maps which simplify the complex ethnography of Celtic history for the non-specialist. The result is a cartography that is highly usable for all. Like most "glossies," the photographs are attractive, often stunningly beautiful (although the photograph on p. 105 is blurred), and well-chosen. The book is nearly free from error although "Urartu" on p. 19 is misspelled.

Because of the importance of the Celts for NT history and backgrounds as well as their interaction with the expanding church, the present volume is a welcome addition for those interested in expanding their horizons. Unfortunately, the price will probably discourage many from acquiring the text.

DONALD L. FOWLER

Today's Gospel: Authentic or Synthetic?, by Walter Chantry. Edinburgh/Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1970. Pp 93. 45p [\$1.00]. Paper.

Provocative, stimulating, and in many ways, very convicting, this volume can be easily read and mentally evaluated during one brief sitting. It is a *must* for all pastors and evangelists. Chantry's burden could help many earnest laborers bring their evangelistic message and method into closer conformity with the Word of God.

In his introduction, Chantry perceptively surveys the contemporary situation. He exposes two essential deviations from scriptural standards: 1) the current trend of compromising or minimizing the Truth for the sake of organizational unity (pp. 10-12), and 2) the phenomenon of widespread accommodations to an unbiblical "neo-traditionalism" (pp. 12-18). At the outset, it is comforting to note that the author's remarks are based upon a system of apologetics which is thoroughly biblical.

The six chapters which constitute the core of his argument take as their point of departure exhortations from portions of Mark 10:17-27. Based upon Jesus' illustrative dealings with the rich young ruler, Chantry outlines a biblical methodology for evangelism.

Stress is placed upon an approach which is essentially theocentric rather than anthropocentric (chaps. 1-2, pp. 19-46). Repentance is duly emphasized (pp. 47-56) along with some valuable considerations in reference to the lordship of Christ (pp. 57-66). Amid these discussions, Chantry challenges unjustifiable presentations of a carnal Christian scapegoat mechanism (cf. pp. 54-55). He also blisters the easy believism approach to evangelism (cf. pp. 64-66).

Such vital discussions naturally lead into a challenge of current procedures which coerce recipients into accepting a one-sided or distorted assurance of their salvation (pp. 67-77). Concerning the efforts of a significant number of earnest witnesses, Chantry observes that "so many Christian workers feel compelled to do the Holy Spirit's work of giving assurance in their evangelism!" (p. 67).

Chapter 6, "Preaching With Dependence Upon God," is crucial. This is so because of the greatest obstacle facing all ministers of reconciliation — total depravity. Chantry offers a commendable survey of this essential doctrine as it applies to the presentation of the gospel (pp. 81-89); however, being undoubtedly committed to a specific *ordo salutis*, his comments sometimes venture beyond the biblical data (cf. p. 84).

This reviewer finds no better concluding exhortation than that which has already issued from Chantry's burdened heart; "Rise above deadening evangelical tradition and 'earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints' [Jude 3]" (p. 92).

GEORGE J. ZEMEK, JR.

The Bible in the Balance, by Harold Lindsell. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979. Pp. 384. \$9.95.

Here is a book that tells it exactly like it is! The author is a Southern Baptist who has served as vice-president and professor at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena and as professor at Columbia Bible College in Columbia, SC, and at Northern Baptist Seminary in Chicago. In addition, he is the editor of the *Harper Study Bible* and editor emeritus of *Christianity Today*. With these credentials, no one can hang an "ultra-fundamentalist" label on Dr. Lindsell. He was the right man to author this book and its bombshell predecessor, *The Battle for the Bible* (Zondervan, 1976).

As its title suggests, this book is an extension of *The Battle for the Bible* and continues to sound the alarm, and rightly so, to evangelicals in America concerning the integrity of the Bible. The author states the purpose of this follow-up book in these words: "I wish to address myself to the objections raised by those who disagree with me. . . . Moreover, I wish to add to the case I presented in the first book, so that even the most obdurate will have to admit there is a problem with noninerrancy in regard to the trustworthiness of Scripture, not only in matters having to do with history, science, and the cosmos, but also as to theological matters having to do with faith and practice, both directly and indirectly" (p. 20). Dr. Lindsell has achieved his purpose admirably.

The author fully understands that biblical inerrancy, in its *absolute* sense and as understood by inerrantists, pertains to the autographa of Scripture and not to the voluminous extant materials from which edited texts are produced and into which scribal errors have crept. Yet, because of the numerous extant copies and the science of textual criticism, we can say that the Bible which we have today is indeed the written Word of God and is entirely trustworthy, not only in matters of faith and practice, but in all other matters as well including history, science, and creation.

The book, of necessity, names some of the leading opponents of inerrancy within so-called "evangelicalism." The author's documentation for his charges is impeccable. The list reads almost like a "Who's Who" of internationally known denominational leaders, scholars, and pastors and, while focusing primarily on the leadership of Southern Baptist institutions and Fuller Theological Seminary, it extends even to the smaller denominations and parachurch groups. The book demonstrates conclusively that these individuals have departed from the historic doctrinal stances of their denominations and institutions in the matter of the inerrancy and complete trustworthiness of the Scriptures. The evidence against them is mountainous. They have no case.

The author goes further and challenges the "pious" claim that since battles over doctrine divide the church they should not be fought (p. 91). His answer is that doctrine *always* divides. Should we therefore abandon doctrine? Lindsell insists that the real question is not whether doctrine divides but whether our doctrines are true or false. If inerrancy is true then the problem of church division rests squarely upon the shoulders of the opponents of inerrancy, not its advocates. Throughout the book Lindsell rightly challenges the integrity of pastors, scholars, and church leaders who sign doctrinal statements with "tongue-in-cheek" attitudes. His challenge is based solidly upon Christian ethics and his point is well made.

That errantists cannot handle the miracle of "dual authorship" in the doctrine of verbal, plenary inspiration is also made patent in this book (pp. 149ff.). To errantists, any human involvement demands human error. This, of course, overlooks the divine superintendence of the Holy Spirit in the inspiration of Scripture. Errantists seem shut up to either a completely human book with errors or to a purely "mechanical dictation" view of inspiration which neither they nor most inerrantists can accept.

The underlying cause of so many departures from a belief in the inerrancy of Scripture is seen by the author in the subtle inroads into evangelical seminaries of various shades of the "historical-critical" method of exegeting and interpreting Scripture. Lindsell traces this methodology historically to the Renaissance and, particularly, to Johann Salomo Semler (an 18th-century, German rationalistic theologian). This methodology insists on a purely historical-philological interpretation of the Bible, which presupposes the Bible to be a purely human book and denies God's supernatural activity in history. Lindsell believes that many evangelical scholars use this negative methodology, either consciously or unconsciously, with evangelical presuppositions, under the illusion of being accepted by liberal theological academia or, perhaps, to win liberals over to the evangelical viewpoint (p. 283). The end, of course, is disaster to both evangelicalism and inerrancy, and

the process (the historical-critical method) inescapably eventuates in an impossible obligation to find the "canon within the canon" (pp. 288-90) and in a mentality that resorts to "cultural relativity" in the matter of ethics by refusing to accept biblical ethical norms for today.

Lindsell also wrestles with the problem of labels. Who can really be called an "evangelical" today? He ultimately concludes that the doctrine of inerrancy is inextricably linked to the person of Jesus Christ and that a denial of inerrancy is a denial of the lordship of Christ which consequently disqualifies one from being an evangelical. This reviewer agrees. However, is the label "evangelical" still serviceable? Lindsell doubts that it is and suggests the possibility of going back to either the label "fundamentalist" (with all of its pejoratives) or "Orthodox Protestant" as a description of those who hold to inerrancy along with the other cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith.

What does Lindsell see for the future regarding orthodox, conservative denominations and institutions? While commanding the stand taken by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod under the leadership of J. A. O. Preus to reverse the errantist cancer in that synod, Lindsell does not present a bright prospect for the church and its institutions in general. He knows full well, as he repeatedly affirms, that a denial of inerrancy in matters of history, science, and the cosmos ultimately leads (as he proves in his book) to a denial of matters of faith and practice also. It is only a question of time. But Lindsell, like most inerrantists, leaves the matter ultimately in the hands of our sovereign God. In the meantime, the battle goes on. Lindsell, *like many before him* who were laughed "out of court," has sounded the alarm. Whether or not evangelical churches will awaken from their crippling slumber is another matter.

Apart from several printing errors in the book, especially the confusion on pp. 319-21, this reviewer finds little to fault in this book. Although being rabidly criticized by many for *The Battle for the Bible* and its telling exposures, Dr., Lindsell has retained an irenic spirit in the writing of this sequel and he supplies cogent answers to his opponents. The evidence is incontrovertible. From the human perspective, the Bible is indeed in the balance!

This book needs to be read by every serious Christian who can read the English language. It is of special importance to every person who honestly desires to know what is really going on in the respective denominations.

JOHN A. SPROULE

Armageddon Now: The Premillenarian Response to Russia and Israel Since 1917, by Dwight Wilson. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977. Pp. 258. \$4.95. Paper.

As a middle-aged man, many of the antics of my youth are remembered with a bit of embarrassment. This book, likewise, reminds the chiliastic world of its heritage in that it brings to light the youthful excesses of the premillennial past (unfortunately, there are many who still choose to frolic). In effect, the author has surveyed the life of the entire written corpus of the premillennialist community for the last century. The embarrassments are acute, alleviated only by the knowledge that the myriad of quotation in this volume represents only the unfortunate in the life of that movement.

In the main, it would be difficult to disagree with the contents of the volume since it is primarily composed of extensive quotations from past premillennial sages. In this respect, the book is a blessing for which I had frankly been seeking. Having taught for several years a course on Bible Prophecy, I lamented the need of a volume which might show us the blight of past excesses. In fact, I had sent my students into the same journals from which Wilson quotes so extensively. The book, however, has admirably met that need.

Wilson frequently scores premillennialists over their uncritical support of the Jewish State while failing to deal fairly with the issue of displaced Arabs. He is often convincing in this endeavor. On the other hand, the polemical tone of the book will certainly limit its usage among the very audience for which it was intended. For example, Wilson, commonly accuses premillennialists of "determinism." Not many will agree with him when he polemicizes, "The response to Jews and Israel has demonstrated that the premillenarians are guilty of the charge of determinism even to the extent of heretical antinomianism" (p. 217). Such rhetoric is not likely to convince an opponent, although it is likely to please one's supporters.

Wilson roundly condemns premillennialists for anti-Semitism throughout the book. "For the premillenarian, the massacre of Jewry expedited his blessed hope" (p. 95). This seems to be a rather striking example of *argumentum ad hominem*. It is doubtful in the extreme that anyone outside the higher echelons of Nazism had any knowledge that the Jews were being massacred in World War II. Indeed, the Jews themselves refused to believe the horror stories. Furthermore, a general accusation of lack of compassion after the fact was publicized can hardly be leveled against any group on earth (with the exception of the Soviets and the Ku Klux Klan). Nevertheless, it should be readily admitted that the thinking of many premillennialists concerning the Jews is often contradictory.

Another example of muddled reasoning can be seen in his discussion of the premillennialist attitude towards Russia. On p. 107, he recognizes that antipathy towards Russia related in part to its atheism and persecution of the church. Yet, he insists that "most of it centered, as before, upon the prophetic character of Russia herself. . . ." On the next page, however, he states that "the atheism was not just an aspect of premillenarian criticism — it was central." Furthermore, it would seem to be difficult to explain why the entire church (quite apart from the premillennial stance) has also generated such antipathy towards Russia. On the contrary, the real issue for most premillennialists is Communism and its persecution of the church. Lastly, Wilson should have made an attempt to point out that not all premillennialists are guilty of these excesses. Indeed, one wonders how a post-tribulationalist could be guilty of many of his criticisms since to them the fate of the church and Jewry is identical.

Despite these comments, I would not hesitate to use and recommend the book. Indeed, were I a pastor, I would encourage my entire congregation to read it. Thanks are to be rendered to the author for his service in chronicling the excesses of our embarrassing past.

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Issues In The Contemporary World — “The Significance of the Doctrine of Creation” (pp. 325-29); “The Relevance of the Historical” (pp. 330-39); “William Barclay and the Virgin Birth” (pp. 340-43); “God and the War” (pp. 344-55); “The Christian World Order” (pp. 356-66); “Christian Education” (pp. 367-74).

Collected Writings of John Murray: Vol 2. Select Lectures in Systematic Theology, by John Murray. Philadelphia, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1977.

- I. "The Origin of Man" (pp. 3-13); "The Nature of Man" (pp. 14-22); "Trichotomy" (pp. 23-33); "Man in the Image of God" (pp. 34-46); "The Adamic Administration" (pp. 47-59); "Free Agency" (pp. 60-66); "The Fall of Man" (pp. 67-76); "The Nature of Sin" (pp. 77-82); "Inability" (pp. 83-89).
- II. "Common Grace" (pp. 93-119).
- III. "The Plan of Salvation" (pp. 123-31); "The Person of Christ" (pp. 132-41); "The Atonement" (pp. 142-50); "The Obedience of Christ" (pp. 151-60).
- IV. "The Call" (pp. 161-66); "Regeneration" (pp. 167-201); "Justification" (pp. 202-22); "Adoption" (pp. 223-34); "Faith" (pp. 235-63); "The Assurance of Faith" (pp. 264-74).
- V. "Definitive Sanctification" (pp. 277-84); "The Agency in Definitive Sanctification" (pp. 285-93); "Progressive Sanctification" (pp. 294-304); "The Pattern of Sanctification" (pp. 305-12); "The Goal of Sanctification" (pp. 313-17).
- VI. "The Nature and Unity of the Church" (pp. 321-35); "The Government of the Church" (pp. 336-44); "The Form of Government" (pp. 345-50); "Arguments against Term Eldership" (pp. 351-56); "Office in the Church" (pp. 357-65); "The Sacraments" (pp. 366-69); "Baptism" (pp. 370-75); "The Lord's Supper" (pp. 376-80); "Restricted Communion" (pp. 381-84).
- VII. "The Interadvental Period and the Advent: Matthew 24 and 25" (pp. 387-400); "The Last Things" (pp. 401-17).

Science, Faith and Revelation: An Approach to Christian Philosophy, by Bob E. Patterson. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979.

Preface — E. Glenn Hinson, "Eric Charles Rust: Apostle to an Age of Science and Technology" (pp. 13-25).

Part I: Faith and Transcendence — Doran McCarty, "Karl Heim and Teilhard de Chardin: Christian and Scientific Responses to the Problem of Transcendence" (pp. 27-37); John MacQuarrie, "Transcendent Beliefs" (pp. 38-48); Roger Hazelton, "Transcendence and Theological Method" (pp. 49-64); David L. Mueller, "The Mystic Union in the Sermons of Meister Eckhart" (pp. 65-81); John Powell Clayton, "Can Theology Be Both Cultural and Christian?: Ernst Troeltsch and the Possibility of a Mediating Theology" (pp. 82-112).

Part II: Faith and the Historical Process: — Stuart R. Sprague, "A Point of Departure for Process Theology: Christian Natural Theology" (pp. 113-26); G. R. Beasley-Murray, "Faith and the Parousia" (pp. 127-43); Max E. Polley, "Revelation in the Writings of H. Wheeler Robinson and Eric Rust: A Comparative Study" (pp. 144-66); Osadolor Imasogie, "The Apologetic Challenge of the Radical Theological Movement" (pp. 167-98).

Part III: Faith and the Biblical Revelation — Richard B. Cunningham, "The Concept of God in the Thought of Eric Rust" (pp. 199-223); Paul S.

Minear, "Faith and Freedom: A Case Study" (pp. 224-38); Frank Stagg, "What Is Truth?" (pp. 239-60); W. L. Hendricks, "Imagination and Creativity as Integral to Hermeneutics" (pp. 261-82); R. E. Clements, "Prophecy and Revelation" (pp. 283-301).

Part IV: Faith and the Natural Order — William G. Pollard, "Alternative Histories" (pp. 302-16); Al Studdard, "Ian T. Ramsey: The Language of Science and the Language of Religion" (pp. 317-35); Leroy Seat, "Scientific Knowledge as Personal Knowledge" (pp. 336-54); Robert M. Baird, "Leibniz and Locke: On the Relationship Between Metaphysics and Science" (pp. 355-68).

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS

One happy event in contemporary publishing circles has been a renewed interest in publishing out-of-print works. Several publishers have been active in this endeavor. In this issue of the journal, a brief perusal will be made of those dealing with Old Testament subjects while the Fall issue will deal with New Testament reprints.

Theology of the Old Testament, by Gustav F. Oehler. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 (originally published in 1873). \$16.50.

This has long been one of the better theologies from the conservative perspective. Oehler (1812-1872) accepted the JEDP and deutero-Isaiah theories although the work itself is a reaction against the rationalism of his time. Used with discretion, it is still valuable for the minister today.

A New Commentary on Genesis, by Franz Delitzsch. 2 vols. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 (1888). \$21.95.

That a volume as old as this could still be so useful stands as a genuine compliment to the great skills of its author. These volumes are of somewhat better quality than that of the combined efforts of Keil and Delitzsch. It is with gladness that the minister faces the addition of this to his library.

The Unity of the Book of Genesis, by William Henry Green. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 (1895). \$9.95. Paper.

At the turn of the century, classical Wellhausian approaches concerning the Documentary Hypothesis were ravaging orthodox churches and schools. This book is a reaction to that Documentary Hypothesis. Since classical Wellhausian concepts per se are no longer held, it is difficult to see much value in the reprinting of this volume. Unfortunately, many will no doubt

think they have an answer to modern critics through this volume. Used judiciously, it may have some ongoing value but \$9.95 for a paperback of an outdated work makes it an unattractive proposition.

Studies in the Book of Daniel, by R. D. Wilson. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 (1917). \$10.95.

Wilson may well be the finest conservative scholar on the OT. Anything which he wrote is worthy of being read. Many of his arguments are valid even today. This volume, like Pusey's, is actually a defense of the orthodox view of Daniel rather than a commentary. The only complaint would be the price (\$10.95) which is steep for a paperback.

Obadiah and Habakkuk, by Edward Marbury. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1979 (1649-50). \$19.50.

This is not a commentary on these neglected books so much as it is a sermonic treatment complete with outlines. Its size (763 pp.) makes it bulky to use although it does have some value.

The History of the Religion of Israel: an Old Testament Theology, by John Howard Raven. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 (1933). \$9.95.

The relative dearth of conservative scholarship in the area of OT Theology renders this volume a usability beyond its actual quality. On the other hand, if the tenets of orthodoxy are correct, they lend a certain timelessness to its literature. That timelessness will make this volume usable for some years to come.

Old Testament Word Studies, by William Wilson. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1978 (1870). \$19.95.

This volume attempted to merge the features of a concordance with those of a lexicon. The concordance is keyed to a given English word from the Authorized Version under which are listed the various Hebrew words which may underlie the English. He then gives a lexical discussion of each Hebrew word used. The volume is handy but should be used with caution as a result of the many advances in translating given Hebrew words.

The Book of Genesis and Part of the Book of Exodus, by Henry Alford. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1979 (1872). N.P.

This commentary on Genesis and Exodus (1-25) has the distinction of being done by a NT scholar. That feature makes it attractive in that he is free to draw upon his classical Greek heritage on many occasions. The author was basically orthodox. The volume is of help to the pastor building sermons but there are numerous, more reliable volumes that should be purchased first.

The Book of Job, by Edgar Gibson. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 (1899). \$7.95.

This is a useful volume for the sermon-builder on Job. It attempts to interact with the versions on a selective basis. Great strides have been made in understanding the difficult Hebrew of Job since 1899. Used with an up-to-date commentary, this one may be consulted.

An Exposition of the Book of Isaiah, by William Kelly. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1979 (1871). N.P.

The author's pretribulational, premillennial views will make this volume attractive to those of that stance. It does not really rival those of Delitzsch or Young in quality and should be used only in company with those volumes.

An Exposition of Ezekiel, by Patrick Fairbairn. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1979 (1851). N.P.

This volume is postmillennial in its theology and that somewhat mars its value. On the other hand, it is still useable — especially when it is remembered that there are so few works from conservatives on Ezekiel.

The First Book of Samuel, by William G. Blaikie. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 (1893). \$11.95. *The Second Book of Samuel*, by William G. Blaikie. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 (1887). \$10.95.

These were originally published in the *Expositor's Bible* in 1887-88. The text is popularly written and devotional in character.

Daniel the Prophet, by E. B. Pusey. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 (1885). \$16.50.

This is probably the best work of the 19th century on Daniel. Actually, however, it is not a commentary; rather, it is a defense of Daniel against the charges of the critics of his day.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ARRINGTON, LEONARD J. and DAVIS BITTON. *The Mormon Experience*. New York: Knopf, 1979. Pp. xiv+404. \$15.00.

BARBER, CYRIL J. *How To Gain Life-Changing Insights from the Book of Books*. Winona Lake: BMH, 1979. Pp. 16 (paper). N.P.

BARKAI, MALACHI. *Theoretical Implications of Consonant Sequence Constraints in Israeli Hebrew* and ZEV BAR-LEV, *The Ordering of Hebrew Morphological Processes*. Afroasiatic Linguistics 6/1, ed. by Robert Hetzron and Russel G. Schuh. Malibu: Undena, 1978. Pp. 22 (paper). N.P.

BERMAN, RUTH ARONSON. *Lexical Decomposition and Lexical Unity in the Expression of Derived Verbal Categories in Modern Hebrew*. Afroasiatic Linguistics 6/3, ed. Robert Hetzron and Russel G. Schuh. Malibu: Undena, 1979. Pp. 26 (paper). N.P.

BOICE, JAMES MONTGOMERY. *The Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979. Pp. 411; indexes. \$9.95.

BOTTOMS, LAWRENCE. *Ecclesiastes Speaks to Us Today*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1979. Pp. 109. \$3.95. (paper).

BUCELLATI, GIORGIO and MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI. *Terqa Preliminary Reports, No. 6*. Syro-Mesopotamian Studies 2/6. Malibu: Undena, 1978. Pp. 36 (paper). N.P.

BUCY, RALPH D. *The New Laity: Between Church and World*. Waco: Word, 1978. Pp. 216. \$7.95. (paper).

BURSTEIN, STANLEY MAYER. *The Babylonica of Berossus. Sources from the Ancient Near East 1/5*. Malibu: Undena, 1978. Pp. 37 (paper). N.P.

CHRISTENSEN, MICHAEL J. C. S. *Lewis on Scripture*. Waco: Word, 1979. Pp. 120. \$6.95.

CHRISTIAN, C. W. *Friedrich Schleiermacher*. Waco: Word, 1979. Pp. 157. \$7.95.

CRISWELL, W. A. *Acts: An Exposition. Vol. 1: Chapters 1-8*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978. Pp. 285. \$9.95.

DABNEY, ROBERT L. *Sacred Rhetoric or A Course of Lectures on Preaching*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth, 1979. Pp. 361. \$3.50.

DELOE, JESSE B. *Sweeter Than Honey*. Winona Lake: BMH, 1979. Pp. 154. \$2.95. (paper).

DI GANGI, MARIANO. *I Believe in Mission*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979. \$2.95 (paper).

GANGEL, KENNETH. *The Family First*. Winona Lake: BMH, 1979. Pp. 135. \$2.50 (paper).

HEFLEY, JAMES and MARTI. *By Their Blood: Christian Martyrs of the 20th Century*. Milford, MI: Mott Media, 1979. Pp. 636. \$7.95 (paper).

HODGE, CHARLES. *The Way of Life*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1978. Pp. 238. \$1.25 (paper).

HOYT, HERMAN A. *The First Christian Theology: Romans*. Winona Lake: BMH, 1977. Pp. 187. \$3.95 (paper).

JEREMIAH, DAVID. *The Baptism of the Holy Spirit*. Winona Lake: BMH, n.d. \$1.00 (paper).

KARFF, SAMUEL E. *Aggada: The Language of Jewish Faith*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1979. Dist. KTAV. Pp. 216. \$12.50.

KENT, HOMER A. *Treasure of Wisdom: Studies in Colossians and Philemon*. Winona Lake: BMH, 1978. Pp. 184. \$3.95.

KYSAR, MYRNA and ROBERT. *The Asundered: Biblical Teachings on Divorce and Remarriage*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1978. Pp. 121. \$5.95.

LOCKYER, HERBERT. *Light to Live By*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979. N.P.

MATHER, COTTON. *The Great Works of Christ in America*. Vols. 1 & 2. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1979. Pp. 626 & 682. £12.00.

MURRAY, IAIN. *The Forgotten Spurgeon*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1978. Pp. 254. \$3.50 (paper).

NICHOLAS, DAVID R. *What's a Woman to Do . . . in the Church?* Scottsdale, AZ: Good Life, 1979. Pp. xiii+150. \$7.95.

PATTERSON, ROBERT E. (ed.). *Science, Faith, and Revelation: An Approach to Christian Philosophy*. Nashville: Broadman, 1979. N.P.

PETTINATO, GIOVANNI. *Old Canaanite Cuneiform Texts of the Third Millennium*. Sources from the Ancient Near East 1/7. Malibu: Undena, 1979. Pp. 17 (paper). N.P.

STEIDL, PAUL M. *The Earth, The Stars, and The Bible*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979. Pp. 250. \$5.95 (paper).

THIELICKE, HELMUT. *The Faith Letters*. Waco: Word, 1978. Pp. 194. \$7.95.

WEBER, ROBERT E. *The Secular Saint*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979. Pp. 219. \$7.95.

WHITCOMB, JOHN C. and DONALD B. DEYOUNG. *The Moon: Its Creation, Form, and Significance*. Winona Lake: BMH, 1978. \$7.95.

WILLOUGHBY, WILLIAM G. *Counting the Cost*. Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1979. N.P.

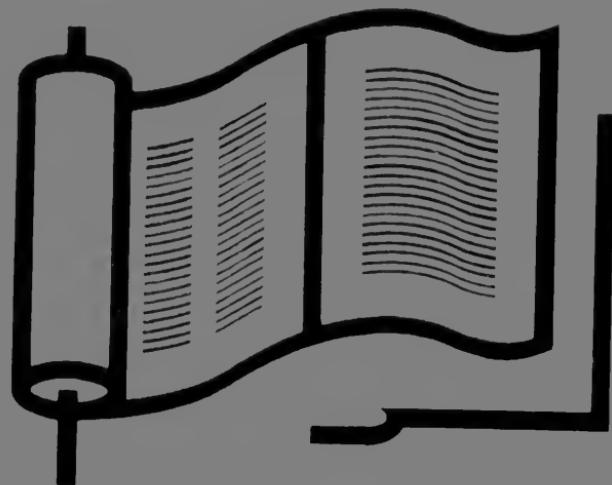






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JOHN R. W. STOTT ON SOCIAL ACTION

GARY T. MEADORS

The place of social concerns in missions has become an important issue in evangelicalism within the past decade. In the last year, one of the leading spokesmen for including social action as an equal partner with evangelism in missions has been John Stott. The salient points of Stott's arguments and his use of Scripture are examined and found to be wanting. Furthermore, the emphasis seen in Stott's recent writings illustrates a trend in the thinking of many evangelicals which is cause for concern.

* * *

THE battle lines in the present debate over the Bible include the foundational issues of epistemology and authority. The authority of Scripture is also the battle line for another battle—the battle for world evangelization. The authority of Scripture is acquiesced to and even claimed, but its authority is rendered void by faulty hermeneutics and unbiblical emphases.

At the forefront of this battle is one of Evangelicalism's favorite sons, John R. W. Stott, Rector Emeritus of All Souls Church in London and also an honorary chaplain to the Queen of England. There is some suspicion, however, that Stott is not a true friend to biblical evangelicalism.

The present paper is a selective review of John Stott's articles in the "Cornerstone" column of *Christianity Today* from September 21, 1979 to May 23, 1980.¹ Two themes are preeminent in this period of

¹John R. W. Stott, "Peacemaking is a Management Responsibility" (Sept. 21, 1979) 36-37; "The Biblical Scope of the Christian Mission" (Jan. 4, 1980) 34-35; "Calling for Peacemakers in a Nuclear Age, Part I" (Feb. 8, 1980) 44-45; "Calling for Peacemakers in a Nuclear Age, Part II" (March 7, 1980) 44-45; "Economic Equality Among Nations: A Christian Concern?" (May 2, 1980) 36-37; "The Just Demands of Economic Inequality" (May 23, 1980) 30-31. Hereinafter the date of the magazine will be used for note citation.

writing: The Christian as a peacemaker and the need for Christian concern for universal opportunity for economic equality.

A proper and full evaluation of Stott would require an in-depth study of all of his publications in chronological order, especially from 1966 to the present, a period of shifting from his original position on missions to his present emphasis on social action. This study, however is not within the scope of the present review.

AN INTRODUCTION TO STOTT'S ASSERTIONS

The purpose of this section is to give an overview of Stott's assertions in the articles cited in the introduction. Several aspects of these articles will be dealt with in more detail in the following sections of this review.

Initial background

The articles presently under consideration take on more meaning when viewed in reference to Stott's controversy with Arthur Johnston of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Johnston published *The Battle for World Evangelism* in 1978. In this work he surveyed the history of modern evangelism, particularly in light of the ecumenical movement. He pointed out how Lausanne is slipping dangerously in the same direction. He also presented some severe criticisms of Stott and his shift from evangelism only to evangelism and social action as equal partners in world mission. Johnston went so far as to declare that "Stott has dethroned evangelism as the only historical aim of mission."²

Stott responded to Johnston in his "Cornerstone" Column in *Christianity Today*.

Brother Art, you say that I have "dethroned evangelism as the only historical aim of mission"; I would prefer to say that I have attempted to "enthrone love as the essential historical motivation for mission."³

The emphasis of Stott's post-Johnston writing would lead one to conclude that there is really only room for one master on the throne, namely, "love" as evidenced by social action.

Stott has not always expressed himself for a dual mission. He describes his own journey in mission thinking from Berlin in 1966 to the publication of *Christian Mission in the Modern World* in 1975.

²Arthur Johnston, *The Battle for World Evangelism* (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1978) 303.

³Stott, 1/4/80, 35.

After exposing the biblical teaching for the great commission, Stott remarks,

The cumulative emphasis seems clear. It is placed on preaching witnessing and making disciples, and many deduce from this that the mission of the church, according to the specification of the risen Lord, is exclusively a preaching, converting and teaching mission. Indeed, I confess that I myself argued this at the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin in 1966, when attempting to expound the three major versions of the Great Commission.

Today, however, I would express myself differently. It is not just that the commission includes a duty to teach converts everything Jesus had previously commanded (Matthew 28:20), and that social responsibility is among the things which Jesus commanded. I now see more clearly that not only the consequences of the commission but the actual commission itself must be understood to include social as well as evangelistic responsibility, unless we are to be guilty of distorting the words of Jesus.⁴

Stott proceeds, immediately after making the above point, to redefine Christian mission. He asserts that the Johannine commission constitutes the real key to mission. He explains John's view of mission in relation to Jesus' statement that "as the Father hath sent me, so send I you" (John 17:18; 20:21). In answer to the question "in what sense was the Son sent," he reduces the Father's commission to the Son to one of service. Jesus was sent to serve and likewise we are sent to serve.⁵

Stott's view of service, however, is social, not redemptive. While it was within the mission of Christ to be both a servant and a Savior (Mark 10:45), we are only able to be servants since "we are not saviors."⁶ He insists that we are to serve as Jesus served: "he fed hungry mouths and washed dirty feet, he healed the sick, comforted the sad and even restored the dead to life."⁷

Stott's observations are only partially true. Jesus did serve, but his service was redemption oriented, *not* service oriented. He was the Suffering Servant of Jehovah and all of his acts of service were designed to magnify his redemptive mission. They were not designed to draw attention to themselves as acts of service but to draw attention to the Servant as the promised Messiah. Jesus' response to the disciples of John the Baptist makes this quite clear (cf. Matt 11:2-6).

⁴John R. W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1975) 23.

⁵Ibid., 23, 24

⁶Ibid., 24.

⁷Ibid.

From his limited view of the Johannine commission, Stott builds a structure of social action as "a partner of evangelism."⁸ He also appeals to the great commandment to love your neighbor as support for social action.

Stott's concept of the Johannine commission constitutes a move to support his burning desire to wed evangelism and social action as equal in importance. It is the same kind of invalid hermeneutic which he employs in the articles about to be analyzed.

The "Cornerstone" articles

The "Cornerstone" articles from September, 1979, to May, 1980, reflect Stott's deepening commitment to evangelical involvement in social action. They also clearly reflect Stott's involvement with Lausanne's call for a simple life style,⁹ an aspect of the continuing influence of Lausanne in which Stott is intimately involved.

The industrial problems of Britain during the winter of 1978-79 stimulated Stott to formulate a theology of peacemaking which he extends to various domains. He asserts:

Social turmoil is of special concern to Christians because we are in the business of right relations. Reconciliation is at the top of our agenda because it is at the heart of our gospel. Jesus is the world's supreme peacemaker, and he tells his followers to be peacemakers too.¹⁰

Having modified the spiritual concept of reconciliation to include sociopolitical areas and having put these areas at the top of the evangelical agenda, Stott proceeds in his series of articles to balance numerous concepts upon the foundation of his view of a peacemaker. The following chart summarizes the articles.

| |
|---|
| Industrial justice (10/21/79) |
| Social missions (1/4/80) |
| Anti-war/nuclear (2/8/80) |
| Political involvement (3/7/80) |
| Universal opportunity for economic equality (5/2,23/80) |
| Christian Peacemakers |

⁸Ibid., 27.

⁹Cf. International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle publication, "An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Lifestyle" (March, 1980). Obtain from Unit on Ethics and Society, World Evangelical Fellowship, 300 W. Apsley St., Philadelphia, PA 19144.

¹⁰Stott, 9/21/79, 36. He does not develop Matt 5:9 theologically until 2/8/80.

Stott evaluates *industrial justice* from the perspective of 1 Kings 12. He sees in this passage the principle of "mutual service arising from mutual respect."¹¹ His evaluation, however, is strongly in favor of the working class. He lays the whole burden for reconciliation on management by calling for a commitment to (1) abolish discrimination; (2) increase participation; and (3) emphasize cooperation.

Stott says many things which are true and reasonable in the socio-political realm. Our argument is not with his politics and social concerns but (1) with his presentation of these ideas under the guise of biblical authority and (2) with his call to the Christian community to forsake (in emphasis if not in essence) biblical models of evangelism in favor of social models.

For example, management, he says, is obligated by biblical authority to practice profit sharing. "Profit sharing also rests on biblical principle: the laborer is worthy of his hire."¹² We have no problem with Paul, but we have our doubts about this modern interpretation.

He further asserts that

In the last century Christians opposed slavery because by it humans were dehumanized by being *owned* by others. In this century we should oppose all labor arrangements in which humans are dehumanized by being *used* by others—even if they have signed away their responsibility in a voluntary contract.¹³

These kinds of comments have far reaching ramifications. In regard to profit sharing, one wonders how Stott would explain Jesus' parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matt 20:1-16).

Stott's concept of "dehumanizing"¹⁴ is even more alarming in light of the biblical concept of God's ownership, and in light of the apostles' nonresistance to slavery. Does the apostles' silence make them guilty of dehumanizing by omission? Is God culpable of dehumanizing when he exercises his sovereign right of ultimate ownership in consigning humans to hell?

Stott begins to labor his linking of *social mission* with evangelism in his January 4 article under the domain of holistic missions. God's character, he says, demands "that he is the God of social justice as well as personal salvation."¹⁵ The nature of man demands "that the neighbor we are to love and serve is a physical and social as well as a

¹¹Stott, 9/21/79, 36.

¹²Ibid., 37.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴He also dehumanized Lazarus in Luke 16; cf. 5/2/80, 37.

¹⁵Stott, 1/4/80, 34.

spiritual person.”¹⁶ The truth or falsehood of these assertions is not the issue. The issue is what constitutes the great commission in its basic biblical statement: evangelism or social justice. Love and service are not absolutes and cannot be judged apart from a truth base; love and service will deteriorate into mere social action if not made subservient to truth. This seems to be the direction in which Stott is going and it is this drift to which we object.

Stott’s *anti-war/nuclear* position appeals to Matthew 5:9 for a theological base. He describes the alarming world scene and then asserts that

It is against this background of horror that we need to hear again the words of Jesus: *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called God's children.* Peacemaking is a divine activity, and we can claim to be authentic children of God only if we seek to do what our heavenly Father is doing. Thus, the basis for peacemaking is theological: it derives from our doctrine of God.¹⁷

A later section will investigate this use of the seventh beatitude. Meanwhile, this same article contains several theologically suspect statements.

First, Stott equates the concepts of salvation and peacemaking. “For Scripture calls judgment his ‘strange work’; his characteristic work, in which he delights, is salvation or peacemaking.”¹⁸

Second, he asserts that Christ’s “resort to violence of word and deed was occasional, alien, uncharacteristic; his characteristic was nonviolence; the symbol of his ministry is not the whip but the cross.”¹⁹ In response, one wonders what happened to the book of Revelation—when the Son of Man in accord with all prophetic Scripture will demonstrate his violent side. One also is puzzled when Jesus makes statements such as “I came not to send peace but a sword” (Matt 10:34). This is a strange kind of social action from the greatest of all peacemakers. In 1 Corinthians 5, and in many other passages, the Bible clearly teaches the truth that it is sometimes necessary to be a “division-maker” in order to be a preserver of truth.

Stott’s discussion of how to inculcate peacemaking in a nuclear age points out the necessity of prayer so that “we might lead a quiet and peaceable life” (1 Tim 2:1-2),²⁰ however, his recommendations for political activism are cultural and not biblical. In fact, they actually

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Stott, 2/8/80, 44.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Stott, 3/7/80, 44.

violate the principle which Paul presents in Timothy in that some of the political activism involved can hardly be labeled as part of a quiet and peaceable life. When Christians are advised to "support *any means* [italics mine] to reduce this confrontation of suspicion and fear" (referring to the bluff tactics of the U.S.A. and Russia), one wonders if this is involved in Paul's prescription for a quiet and peaceable life.

Stott rises to his boldest form when he deals with the *universal economic equality* of the world, and particularly between the Free and the Third Worlds. He sounds a loud and clear note of agreement with West German ex-chancellor Willi Brandt's development report that "the greatest challenge to mankind for the remainder of the century" is to solve the problems of hunger, death in the Third World countries, and illiteracy.²¹ These may indeed be top agenda items for politicians and world economists, but they should not be confused with the evangelistic obligation of evangelical Christians. This issue will be the subject of a later section.

Conclusions

The directional drift of Stott should be alarming to the biblicalist. The above analysis only scratches the surface; every paragraph in Stott's articles needs careful scrutiny.

The following general observations are presented to summarize Stott's writing.

1. There is no mention of biblical salvation from sin as a prerequisite for true peace. Stott would surely deny that he neglects spiritual evangelism and some past publications would tend to support such an affirmation. However, his silence in his present writing along with his strong emphasis on other issues is cause for concern.

2. The theology of man's fall and the concept of depravity are not evident in Stott's thinking. These concepts are absent even when a good opportunity to allude to them presents itself (e.g. 5/23/80, p. 30a).

3. The articles present a one-sided view of the nature of God and reality when the Scriptures clearly indicate duality (e.g. God's attributes are balanced, He is righteous as well as loving).

4. There is an equivocation of spiritual concepts into the domain of the sociopolitical (e.g., reconciliation, 10/21/79, p. 36).

5. There is a lack of a solid grammatical, historical exegesis for theological assertions.

6. No attempt has been made to distinguish between the biblical concepts of truth and love.

²¹Stott, 5/2/80, 36.

These trends signal an initial departure which may pave the way for future deviations.

THE PEACEMAKER OF MATT 5:9

It has been observed that John Stott launches his plea for social action from his perception of the seventh beatitude. The present chapter will endeavor to explicate the exegetical meaning of Matt 5:9 and to compare this meaning with Stott's view of a peacemaker in order to ascertain if his peacemaker concept fits the biblical model.

Greater context of Matthew

The OT foretold that the King was coming; Matthew tells about his arrival and his program. It is the royal gospel, the gospel of the kingdom. Chaps. 1 and 2 tell us about the King's lineage. Chaps. 3 and 4 verify the King's presence and authority. He is verified by the ministry of the Baptist, consecrated by baptism, and proven true by temptation. He is presented to the Jewish nation in chaps. 5-25 as their predicted messianic king. He is rejected with finality by that same nation in chaps. 26 and 27, yet demonstrates the validity of his ultimate triumph in chap. 28.

It should be obvious, therefore, that Matthew portrays Christ as the theocratic king and that the provenance of this gospel is Jewish. It is in no way a treatise on Roman politics or Greek culture.

Immediate context

Matt 5:9 is nestled in the beatitudes which introduce the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon contains the ethical precepts for kingdom life.

It is an understatement to observe that the Sermon on the Mount has been variously interpreted. It is not the purpose of the present paper to review the various interpretive approaches to the Sermon, but merely to affirm that "its principles are applicable to the children of God today."²²

The beatitudes stipulate the attitudes which are necessary in the application of the precepts which are presented in 5:17-7:29. They are predication of character (note the equative verbs), not plans for action.

The remaining precepts of the Sermon present behavioral boundaries for those individuals who profess to be members of the kingdom. They are not dealing with world governments but with individuals who are submitted to a theocratic king.

²²Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible* (Chicago: Moody, 1976) 12.

Matt 5:9

The concern of this section is to discern the biblical meaning of “peacemakers” (*εἰρηνοποιοί*).

Etymology and usage. *Εἰρηνοποιός* is a compound adjective comprised of *ποιέω* (“make”) plus *ειρήνη* (“peace”), and it is used substantively in Matt 5:9. The noun aspect of this compound is probably the most important for etymological purposes. *Ειρήνη* may denote various ideas. It is often the NT equivalent of *שָׁלוֹם* (“peace”), such as in “greetings and similar expressions, where it has the sense of well-being or salvation.”²³ It also reflects “the Rabbinic sphere by its frequent use for concord between men (Acts 7:26; Gal 5:22; Eph 4:3; Jas 3:18; cf. 1 Pet 3:11).”²⁴ In many biblical contexts, the opposite of *שָׁלוֹם* is *עֵילָלָשׁ* (“evil”). Foerster summarizes by observing:

As regards the material use of the term in the NT three conceptions call for notice: a. peace as a feeling of peace and rest; b. peace as a state of reconciliation with God; and c. peace as the salvation of the whole man in an ultimate eschatological sense. All three possibilities are present, but the last is the basis. This confirms the link with OT and Rabbinic usage.²⁵

Therefore, while *ειρήνη* does not have one simple and fixed meaning, it does have strong OT ties, especially with *שָׁלוֹם* and its various usages. As with all word studies, one must look to usage to determine meaning.

Strictly speaking, one cannot determine the usage of “peacemaker” in the NT because it is a hapax legomenon. It is, in fact, a rare word throughout Greek literature. “It is rare in secular Gk. (e.g. Xen., 6,3,4; Cornutus 16p. 23,2; Dio Cass., 44,49,2; 72,15,5; Plut., Mor. 279b; Pollux, 152; Philo, *Spec. Leg.* 2,192), where it is applied in particular to emperors.”²⁶

It does not occur in Josephus,²⁷ the apocrypha and pseudepigrapha,²⁸ or in Moulton and Milligan’s work on the papyri.²⁹ It only occurs in Prov 10:10 and Isa 27:5 in the LXX. The Proverbs passage

²³Werner Foerster, “*εἰρήνη κ.τ.λ.*” in *TDNT* 3 (1964) 411.

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵*Ibid.*, 412.

²⁶H. Beck and C. Brown, “Peace,” in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976) 2. 782.

²⁷Karl H. Rengstorf, ed., *A Complete Concordance to Flavius Josephus* (4 vols.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973).

²⁸On the basis of Christ. Abrah. Wahl, *Clavis Librorum Veteris Testamenti Apocryphorum Philologica* (Graz-Austria: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1972).

²⁹James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949).

refers to man's relationship with man and Isaiah has reference to Israel making peace with God.

It does occur with some frequency in the patristics, especially in its verb form.³⁰ The Fathers use it particularly in relation to divine activity and to the Christian community. The patristic sources, according to Lampe's citations, do not relate the term to worldly political activity but to spiritual and ecclesiastical activity.

In light of this relatively rare use of the term, and in regard to meaning from a biblical perspective, it becomes especially important to search the NT for any clues which may aid our understanding of what constitutes a peacemaker.

In the NT, the verb form is used only in Col 1:20. It refers to Christ's work of spiritual reconciliation "through the blood of his cross" (cf. Acts 10:36; Eph 2:17). Also, ποιέω plus εἰρήνη in syntactical context only occurs twice in the NT. In Eph 2:15 Christ's redemptive work "made peace" in the sense of spiritual reconciliation. In James 3:18 the context associates the term with Christian character and righteousness rather than with social revolution (cf. Eph 4:31, 1 Pet 3:11).

The NT predominantly uses peace in a spiritual, salvific, and ecclesiastical context (cf., e.g., Rom 5:1; 12:18; 15:13,33; 14:19; 1 Cor 14:33; Eph 4:3; 2 Tim 2:22; Heb 12:14). Deity is referred to as "the God of peace" (Rom 16:20; 2 Cor 13:11) and Christ is the founder of peace (John 16:33; Eph 2:14ff.; Luke 2:14 ASV). There is a distinct absence of political usage. Peace in the NT is related to Deity and to those who have submitted to the Deity. It is not a term for the unsaved man or the secular world.

Interpretive tradition. The force of the seventh beatitude has been variously interpreted. Some have viewed it to mean "blessed are those who make this world a better place to live in."³¹ It is thus viewed by some as merely a general admonition to peace in any context.

The church fathers have generally stressed the personal aspect of "peace."³² Augustine saw the peacemaker as first of all spiritual; inward peace was more important to Augustine than outward peace. In fact, ultimate and meaningful peace often demands division.

Too many expositors look exclusively to that other and lower peace, those especially who prize Christianity mainly for its power for healing

³⁰Geoffrey W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961) 421.

³¹William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975) 109.

³²Ibid.

the outward sores of the world, not as that which alone stanches the deep inner wounds of men's souls. Not that the peace of this world is excluded; the Gospel does bring this peace, but only by the way: it is aiming at a higher peace, and one for the sake of which, as being the only true peace, it is willing for a season to forego and sacrifice the other, to be called a troubler, and one who turns the world upside down, to appear to be introducing the sword of division, rather than to be knitting the bands of love.³³

The meaning of peacemaker has also been viewed from the Rabbinic perspective. "The Jewish Rabbis held that the highest task which a man can perform is to establish *right relationships* between man and man."³⁴ Hillel is reported as having said: "Be ye of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace."³⁵ Tasker reflects this position by observing that:

The peacemakers are those who are at peace with God 'the author of peace and lover of concord'; and who show that they are truly *children of God* by striving to use every opportunity open to them to effect reconciliation between others who are at variance.³⁶

"Peacemaker" is best understood in light of the use of this term in its conceptual relationship to reconciliation and the total analogy of peace in the NT. Namely, a peacemaker is one who is first of all at peace with God by virtue of the cross of Christ and is also seeking a peaceful relationship with those he comes into contact with, especially those in his immediate Christian community (Gal 6:10).

This assertion seems to be supported in Matt 5:9 itself. The structure of the beatitudes may well be that of synthetic parallelism. "That is to say, the second line of each Beatitude contains mention of a blessing which completes the promise or pronouncement made in the first line."³⁷ Therefore, a peacemaker is in an intimate way related to the concept "sons of God." It is also helpful to remember that "in Jewish thought, 'son' often bears the meaning 'partaker of the character of,' or the like."³⁸ A peacemaker, therefore, is one who does the

³³R. C. Trench, *Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount Drawn from the Writings of St. Augustine* (London: Macmillan, 1869) 169-70.

³⁴Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 110.

³⁵Willoughby C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925) 41.

³⁶R. V. G. Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961) 62.

³⁷John Wick Bowman, "Travelling the Christian Way—The Beatitudes," *Review and Expositor* 54 (1957) 379. Cf. Also Matthew Black, "The Beatitudes," *Expository Times* 64 (1952-53) 125-26.

³⁸D. A. Carson, *The Sermon on the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978) 26.

kind of work that God does, and since he thus reflects the character of God he is identified with the family term "son." He is a peacemaker in the same sense that his Father is. Hendriksen states it in the following way.

True peace-makers are all those whose Leader is the God of peace (1 Cor. 14:33; Eph. 6:15; 1 Thess. 5:23), who aspire after peace with all men (Rom. 12:18; Heb. 12:14) proclaim the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15), and pattern their lives after the Prince of Peace (Luke 19:10; John 13:12-15; cf. Matt. 10:8).

This, moreover, is not a peace at any price. It is not brought about by compromise with the truth, under the guise of "love" (?). On the contrary, it is a peace dear to the hearts of all who speak the *truth* in love (Eph. 4:15)³⁹

Stott's peacemaker

What is the image of the peacemaker which John Stott presents? the reading of his present writing can only leave one with the impression that for Stott a peacemaker is a political activist in the domain of anti-war, anti-nuclear, anti-arms race, U.S. and Russian relationships and all sorts of public, political dialogue.⁴⁰ While he does mention prayer and ecclesiastical peacemaking, his clear emphasis on social action reveals where his heart is.

If, for the sake of argument, we should accept Stott's concept of peacemaker, then we should find clear implications in the NT that the apostles were political activists. No such evidence exists.

Furthermore, does it not seem strange that Jesus would make a mere political statement and that Matthew would press it when the early church was the least likely group in the Roman world to bring about political peace? It is also significant that for nearly three hundred years we do not find the church involved in political action. George Lawlor well observes:

Here is no political congress, no international board, no League of Nations, no religious order, no church embassage, no World Council. It speaks of those whose peace with God is an accomplished fact (Rom. 5:1), who live in peace, if at all possible, with all men (Rom. 12:18), who work to make and keep peace wherever peace is threatened or lost (Rom. 14:17-19), and who are intent upon following their Prince of Peace (1 Peter 2:21).

However, we are not called upon to sacrifice *truth* for peace, and thus make the latter "peace at any price." Such peace is not really

³⁹William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973) 278-79.

⁴⁰Cf. especially Stott, 2/8/80 and 3/7/80.

peace, because it forsakes the duty of contending for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints (Jude 3) and abandons principle, conviction, and doctrine. True peacemakers do not cry "Peace!" when there is no peace. They do not preach a spurious peace that covers over sin and does not remove it.⁴¹

ECONOMIC EQUALITY?

Stott endeavors to answer the question, "How should Christians react to the growing demand from the Third World for economic justice?"⁴² He proposes two biblical principles as a theological answer and offers several practical avenues of expression in obedience to his principles.

Stott's two principles

The principle of unity. Stott endeavors to build his principle of unity upon Psa 24:1, Gen 1:28, and the parable of the Good Samaritan. Referring to the Psalm and Genesis passages, Stott asserts that "the whole earth was to be developed by the whole people for the common good; all were to share in its God-given resources."⁴³

Even a cursory reading of the cited texts will immediately suggest that Stott's comment constitutes a conceptual leap of great magnitude. For example, Psa 24:1 is a statement of the dependence and ultimate ownership of created kind by the Creator. It does not teach Stott's concept of unity.

Genesis 1:28 merely affirms that man is to wisely control the earth and its creatures for his benefit. It says nothing about political or economic activism. Our larger concern is that on the basis of Christ's finished work, the Christian church has been given a redemptive mandate in the Great Commission of the gospels. Therefore, social action detached from submission to evangelism as outlined in Christ's redemptive mandate constitutes disobedience to the clear teaching of Scripture.

Luke 10:25-37 is also lifted from its biblical context and conveniently inserted into Stott's system. He claims that the major point of this parable is "that true neighbor love ignores racial and national barriers."⁴⁴ He culturalizes the parable in order to demand active involvement in Third World problems.

Stott stretches the point of the parable in using it for his purposes. While it does point out that a neighbor is anyone in need,

⁴¹George L. Lawlor, *Beatitudes Are for Today* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974) 81.

⁴²Stott, 5/2/80, 36.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Stott, 5/2/80, 36.

even an enemy (cf. Lev 19:34; Exod 23:4, 5; 2 Kgs 6:8-23), it does not indicate that the Samaritan was in the business of traveling the world in search of such "neighbors." He did what he could to help while fulfilling his own business responsibilities. In the theocratic kingdom the Jews were responsible for strangers in their domain but not for those outside their domain. The parable is not actually designed to define "neighbor" but to encourage being a neighbor when an obvious opportunity presents itself.

Stott's use of his principle of unity well illustrates his hermeneutical practice. He takes a passage which seems to support what he wants to prove and uses it as a launching pad for his own cultural application. He often emphasizes the truth of a passage—e.g., the general concern a Christian should have for his fellow man—without balancing this with the biblical commands regarding other responsibilities and priorities. Medical care, for example, is often important in missions. But its importance is totally subordinate to the essentials of Christ's redemptive mandate. Stott has lost sight of the revealed priorities.

The principles of equality. The second principle which Stott presents to justify Christian involvement in procuring Third World economic justice is what he terms the principle of equality. Stott summarizes his point in the following way.

At present, millions of people made in God's image are unable to develop their human potential because of illiteracy, hunger, poverty, or disease. It is, therefore, a fundamentally Christian quest to seek for all people equality of opportunity in education (universal education is arguably the principal means to social justice), in trade (equal access to the world's markets), and in power sharing (representation on the influential world bodies that determine international economic relations).⁴⁵

Stott claims that 2 Cor 8:8-15 provides Christians with the principle of equality upon which the above conclusion may rest. It is best to allow the author to speak for himself at this point. He asserts that Paul

grounds his appeal for the poor Judaean churches on the theology of the Incarnation—that is, on the gracious renunciation of Christ, who, though rich became poor so that through his poverty we might become rich (v. 9). It was a renunciation with a view to an equalization. It

⁴⁵Ibid., 37.

should be the same with the Corinthians: "Your abundance at the present time should supply their want . . . that there may be equality" [ellipsis is Stott's].⁴⁶

A few observations concerning 2 Corinthians 8 are in order before evaluating Stott's use of it. First, the unsaved community is not to be read into this context. Paul is encouraging a sort of inter-Christian community credit union. At this time Paul is presenting the need of the Jerusalem Christians, but v 14 also allows for a reversal of need in the future: "that their [Jerusalem saints] abundance also may become a supply for your want." Second, Paul's illustration of Christ's incarnation refers to attitude and position, not economics (cf. Philippians 2).

Stott takes 2 Corinthians 3 and universalizes an idea which Paul restricted to the Christian community. Paul recommended a course of action (v 8), while Stott demands that Christians *must* secure equal opportunity for all the underprivileged and oppressed throughout the world.

Stott's application of 2 Corinthians is theologically suspect on several counts. His view of the image of God in man is inadequate when he asserts that millions of people are not allowed to develop the *imago dei* in themselves *because* they lack the opportunity to do so. Image development takes place by confrontation with the spiritual realities of Christ and His Word (cf. Rom 12; 1 Cor 13), not by a bread line. The unsaved, whether hungry or full, have no capacity for image development. Stott seems to blame the environment, both physical and mental, for what should be credited to man's bent for sin. But the environment is bad because man is bad.

Furthermore, Stott has made fundamental what is at best secondary. When he states that equality in education, trade and politics is a fundamental quest of the Christian church⁴⁷ without even an allusion to man's spiritual problem, he has left the domain of biblical orthodoxy.

Stott's comment that "universal education is arguably the principal means to social justice"⁴⁸ is both naive and alarming. It sounds more like liberal humanism and the philosophy of John Dewey than biblical evangelicism. It is also impossible to reconcile this theory with the revealed means whereby the coming theocratic king will institute true social justice. Unregenerated sinful man ultimately responds to a rod, not to chalk.

⁴⁶Ibid., 36-37.

⁴⁷Ibid., 37

⁴⁸Ibid.; Stott, 5/23/80, 30.

Therefore, Stott's use of 2 Corinthians 8 is invalid. His transition from whatever truth he has found in this passage to his statements concerning social economic action, supposedly based on this passage, is a leap of gigantic proportions.

Another alarming bit of exegesis by Stott is observed in his reference to Luke 16:19-31.⁴⁹ Stott's actual words must be considered here:

We are all tempted to use the enormous complexity of international economics as an excuse to do nothing. Yet this was the sin of Dives. There is no suggestion that Dives was responsible for the poverty of Lazarus either by robbing or by exploiting him. The reason for Dives's guilt is that he ignored the beggar at his gate and did precisely nothing to relieve his destitution. He acquiesced in a situation of gross economic inequality, which had rendered Lazarus less than fully human and which he could have relieved. The paraiah dogs that licked Lazarus's sores showed more compassion than Dives did. Dives went to hell because of his indifference.⁵⁰

Stott, therefore, interprets the main point of this story (whether real or parabolic is not of concern here, for the main theme remains the same) to be economic in nature. Dives ignored (an argument from silence), either consciously or unconsciously, an opportunity for economic equalization with a two-fold result: Lazarus was rendered less than human and Dives went to hell *because* of his economic indifference.

The greater context of Luke 16 includes the parable of the unrighteous steward (vv 1-13) and a denunciation of Pharisaic self-righteousness (vv 14-17). The point in vv 1-17 is that the Pharisees were unfaithful stewards of God's truth (cf. vv 15-17). They preferred the mammon of unrighteousness as a means of success rather than obedience to God's law.

Jesus introduced the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus immediately after upbraiding the Pharisees. This story contributes a significant punch line to the preceding verses, namely, disregard for the law and the prophets has grave consequences and will receive the ultimate punishment (vv 29-31). As Morris puts it, "there is an indication that the rich man's unpleasant situation was not due to his riches (after all, Abraham had been rich), but to his neglect of Scripture and its teaching."⁵¹

⁴⁹Stott, 5/2/80, 37.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 254.

It is true that worldly goods comprise a part of the contrast throughout this chapter. In fact, Luke's gospel itself uses the rich/poor motif on several occasions (cf. 1:53; 6:20-26; 12:13-21). However, the misuse of money merely serves to connect the character of Dives to the character of the Pharisees (cf. v 14) and to refute the belief that riches alone are a proof of divine blessing.

The point throughout Luke 16 is a point of revealed truth, not earthly economics. When revealed truth is ignored, so are many other areas. In a sense, the Pharisees were handling truth like the rich man was handling his money. Likewise, both Dives and those like him go to hell not because of greed and indifference to the needs of others, but because of the refusal to be a steward of truth.

The principles of unity and equality as presented by Stott are a misrepresentation of the biblical text upon which they are allegedly built.

Stott's practical advice

Stott begins his May 23 article with a summary statement of his view of economic justice and then launches out into four specific domains with suggestions of how we can seek "equal opportunity for all human beings (through education, medical care, housing, nutrition, and trade) to develop their full, God-given potential. This is the minimum that love and justice should demand."⁵²

One might label this article as Stott's missionary call to social action. It begins with a passionate appeal that "God may well be calling more Christian people than hear and respond to his call to give their lives in the service of the poor and powerless, in practical philanthropy or Third World development, in politics, or in economics."⁵³ He then proceeds with a four-point sermon on how to do social action: with our heart, our head, our mouth, and our pocket.

The reviewer will merely point out a few of the highlights of Stott's sermon.

He appeals first to our emotions by giving a rather narrow interpretation of Matt 9:35-38.

When Jesus saw the multitudes, hungry and leaderless, he was moved with compassion, and then fed them or taught them or both. It was compassion that aroused and directed his action, and it is compassion that we need most. We have to feel what Jesus felt—the pangs of the hungry, the alienation of the powerless, and the indignities of the wretched of the earth.⁵⁴

⁵²Stott, 5/23/80, 30.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Stott has conveniently omitted the *first* item mentioned by Matthew. Jesus went about "teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom." Jesus' compassion was for a world that was spiritually adrift, not for people without a UNICEF program.

This methodology well illustrates Stott's use of the Bible. We do not disagree that we should have compassion for starving people and for those who suffer from social injustice. We are all confronted with worldly inequalities constantly. But how do we attack these problems? How will we change our world? Our only hope is to follow the example of the apostles: be truth tellers in conjunction with the great commission of our Lord.

Why did Paul not fight slavery? Why did he not attack Rome and its many inequalities between the royal and the working class? Because Paul had a greater task to perform and he was a realist concerning the post-lapse world. Jesus did not call Paul or present day Christians to a primary task of changing the world-system, but to evangelize individuals, to teach them all things He commanded, and to recognize that Satan is the "god of this world" and that our only hope for ultimate political correction is Jesus' second advent.

After Stott corrects our heart, he proceeds to work on our heads. We need, he asserts, increased awareness of the Third World needs. The Third World is like Lazarus at the gate and we affluent Christians are acting like Dives. If we are truly aware we will know what trade agreements are in force and how they affect the Third World economy; we will pressure the news media to increase Third World coverage, and we will make pilgrimages to the Third World for personal contact with their needs.

The next logical step, the third point in his sermon, is to be a witness. We should spread the bad news. People are starving and the Christian world is unconcerned. If one should ask, "How, Dr. Stott, can I be a witness?" We would expect the answer, "Engage in political agitation! Join pressure groups! Outdo the humanists in showing concern! Ask informed and embarrassing questions to the right people!"

The final step is an appeal to put our money where our mouths are; "Most of us (for I include myself) ought to give more generously to aid and development, as well as to world evangelization."⁵⁵

We might be encouraged by a glimmer of light when the word "evangelism" is mentioned. However, as we meditate upon the words "as well as," our hope begins to fade. These words place social responsibility on a par-of-equality with evangelism. Yet, after reading

⁵⁵Ibid., 31.

the "Cornerstone" articles, one wonders whether the use of the term "evangelism" is not simply a semantical dressing for the sake of enhancing orthodox appearance.

A new emphasis

The correlation of the "Cornerstone" articles on economics with Stott's involvement with the International Consultation on Simple Lifestyle held at Hoddesdon, England, in March, 1980, is quite obvious. Stott notes that his May 23 article was written just prior to ICSL's March meeting.⁵⁶ This meeting produced a six-page, single-spaced document on the social concerns (= simple lifestyle) of this Lausanne committee. This statement contains less than half a page on evangelism, and even this statement is permeated with social terminology.

It is impossible to evade the impression that the present burden of John R. W. Stott is more social than evangelistic. Evangelicals should be saddened by the fact that Stott has decided to emphasize social action even more than evangelism. His vigorous role of leadership in evangelical missions over the past several years has gained him a place of prominence and respect in both Europe and America. If his new message is followed, evangelism in the Third World will suffer a devastating blow.

CONCLUSION

This article constitutes a selective review of some of John R. W. Stott's teaching on social action. The study of his "Cornerstone" articles in *Christianity Today* causes concern for the future of Christian missions. The increasing number of articles in *Christianity Today* and other Christian periodicals dealing with social and economic issues would seem to indicate that this new shift in emphasis is not limited to John Stott.

The allegation of Arthur Johnston that "Stott has dethroned evangelism as the only historical aim for mission"⁵⁷ is more evident today than in 1978. The present writings of Stott confirm Johnston's observation beyond question. Unless Stott and the Lausanne trend are checked, the true biblical missionary will become a very small remnant.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Johnston, *The Battle for World Evangelism*, 303.



THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

DONALD B. DEYOUNG AND JOHN C. WHITCOMB

The currently popular theory of the origin of the universe held by the vast majority of astronomers involves a gigantic explosion of matter and energy about twenty billion years ago (the "big bang" theory) with subsequent cosmic expansion and evolution. The authors examine this cosmogony from both scientific (empirical) and biblical (exegetical) perspectives and conclude that it does not fit the facts of general and special revelation.

* * *

THE dominant theme in astronomy today is that the universe was spontaneously born out of chaos. This "big bang" interpretation assumes that an immense explosion of mass-energy took place about fifteen billion years ago. Ever since, we are told, fragments of matter and even space itself have been expanding outward like a fireworks display. Stars and galaxies, planets and people are said to have gradually formed from these fragments in a purely mechanistic fashion.

However, in spite of the current popularity of this theory, the dramatic beginning of the universe which the "big bang" assumes has proven to be an embarrassment to many cosmologists. Where did the initial mass-energy come from? What caused it to become unstable and begin to expand? Natural science simply does not have answers to these fundamental questions. Some scientists have desperately tried to avoid the entire question of ultimate origins by appealing to oscillating or steady state models of the universe which have neither a beginning nor an end. However, neither of these perpetual motion models is conformable to the presently known laws of physics. Others have tried to read the first verses of Genesis directly into the big bang theory. For example, the American astronomer Robert Jastrow feels that God somehow orchestrated the explosion as the Divine method of creation. This is an unsatisfactory compromise, as admitted by Jastrow in the beginning of his book, *God and the Astronomers*:

It should be understood from the start that I am an agnostic in religious matters.¹

Harvard astronomer Steven Weinberg, one of the leading proponents of the big bang, echoes this same frustration:

Can we really be sure of the standard [big bang] model? Will new discoveries overthrow it and replace the present standard model with some other cosmogony, or even revive the steady-state model? Perhaps. I cannot deny a feeling of unreality in writing about the first three minutes [of the universe] as if we really know what we are talking about.²

The more the universe seems comprehensible (via the big bang) the more it also seems pointless.³

The big bang theory continues to lead many others to this same despairing view of the origin and purpose of the universe.

From a biblical standpoint, such frustration is perfectly understandable, and for two prominent reasons. First, the concept of a living, personal, all-knowing, all-powerful and transcendent God is almost totally absent from the thinking of modern cosmologists. Faith in such a God has been replaced by faith in chance through time. All that is really left, however, according to the title of one of Isaac Asimov's latest books, is "A Choice of Catastrophes."⁴

Secondly, even the knowledge that a personal God rules the universe does not necessarily remove all human fear. Though he possessed a profound knowledge of God, David, overwhelmed by the magnitude and silence of the universe around him, could ask, "What is man that Thou dost take thought of him?" (Ps 8:5-8).⁵ Thus, a confidence that God truly exists must be coupled with a deep confidence that he has revealed his clear plan and purpose for men in the words of holy Scripture. "We have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place" (2 Pet 1:19).

EVIDENCE FOR THE BIG BANG

Two discoveries have helped promote the big bang theory in recent years. The *first* is a measured redshift in the light radiated from

¹R. Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975) 11.

²S. Weinberg, *The First Three Minutes* (New York: Basic Books, 1977) 9.

³Ibid., 154.

⁴I. Asimov, *A Choice of Catastrophes: The Disasters That Threaten Our World* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979).

⁵All Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible*, © The Lockman Foundation.

distant stars. This property of starlight is similar to the lowering in pitch of a departing train whistle, also known as the Doppler Effect. Light waves from most stars are found to be stretched out and therefore reddened as if the stars were moving away from the earth at various rates of speed. According to a basic assumption called the cosmological principle, the stars would show an identical expansion from any vantage point in the universe. Thus the light wave shift is taken as direct evidence of a big bang explosion in the remote past.

However, there are a variety of other recognized explanations for the stellar redshift which do not require any explosion or expansion of the universe. For example, light waves can also be reddened by gravity, the attractive force between all matter in the universe. This gravitational effect on light, first predicted by Einstein in 1912, can be demonstrated in laboratory experiments with Mössbauer Spectroscopy.⁶ Interestingly, if the earth happened to be positioned at the precise geometric center of the entire physical universe, the surrounding symmetric sphere of stars and galaxies would exactly produce the redshift that we observe today.⁷ This alternative is *not* a revival of historic geocentrism, since the earth in such a position could still rotate upon its axis and revolve around the sun. Although not essential to a biblical view of creation, this possibility of a special location of planet earth is intriguing in view of the special emphasis given to the earth throughout the Scripture.

The *second* discovery supporting a big bang is the presence of weak microwave radiation throughout space. It was first detected by A. Penzias and R. Wilson of Bell Laboratories, who subsequently received the Nobel Physics Prize in 1978 for their work.⁸ This background radiation is found to have a characteristic temperature just three degrees above absolute zero. It is interpreted as a "last fading ember" from the great explosion itself, and was actually predicted by the big bang theorist George Gamow three decades ago. As with the redshift, however, there are a variety of other possible sources for these detected microwaves. They may be radiated from distant regions of the universe, perhaps from certain varieties of stars. The physical universe is permeated with a complex variety of waves and particles, including cosmic rays, whose origin and purpose we simply don't know at this time. To claim that the microwave background is fossil radiation from a big bang explosion is a biased interpretation based on an unwarranted extrapolation into the past. In

⁶R. Pound and G. A. Rebka, Jr., "Gravitational Red-Shift in Nuclear Resonance," *Physical Review Letters* (1959) 439.

⁷P. C. W. Davies, "Cosmic Heresy," *Nature* 273 (June 1, 1978) 336.

⁸R. W. Wilson, "The Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation," *Science* 205: 4409 (August 31, 1979) 866-74.

conclusion, the two major evidences for the big bang, redshift of starlight and background radiation, are by no means conclusive.

MISSING LINKS

Although the big bang theory is recognized today by the majority of scientists as the final and correct view of cosmic origins, it actually is faced with a number of difficult and fundamental problems. There are several "missing links" in the theory.

Consider first the concept of *missing mass*. If an expanding universe were to consist of sufficient material and unlimited time, gravity would eventually stop the outward motion and pull everything back together again into a cataclysmic fireball. This might even lead to a rebounding universe with endless expansions and contractions. As mentioned earlier, many scientists find this oscillating universe idea attractive since it postpones the embarrassment of explaining an ultimate origin and a final destiny for the universe.

However, recent data reveals that there is simply not enough material in space to draw the universe back upon itself. The mass density of the universe is too small by a factor of one hundred.⁹ Desperate attempts to locate this "missing mass" in the form of neutrinos or black holes remain speculative. The universe is found to be "open" and *not* in an eternal state of alternating expansion and collapse. This conclusion is in agreement with a *one-time* creation origin, even though it is the authors' position that no random big bang explosion ever occurred.

Time is another missing link in the big bang theory. Many observations indicate a recent creation of the universe, only thousands of years ago instead of the assumed billions of years of history. These observations include studies of comets, galaxy shapes, and individual stars.¹⁰ A complex theoretical cycle of evolution has been established for the stars. They are assumed to form initially within vast clouds of gas and dust by gravitational contraction. Then they mature slowly through stages called protostars, main sequence stars, red giants, and finally white dwarf stars. A billion-year time scale is assumed for these changes as the stars power themselves by nuclear fusion. Our own sun is thought to have five billion more years of steady light as a main sequence star before it swells into its red giant phase and extinguishes life on earth. Even so, the sun has a very short life compared to the time span of the big bang. It is called a second or third generation star, not having formed until long after the initial explosion.

⁹N. A. Pananides and T. Arny, *Introductory Astronomy* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979) 321.

¹⁰H. S. Slusher, *Age of the Cosmos* (San Diego: Institute for Creation Research, 1980).

Historical records of the star Sirius B, however, tell a different story. This binary star of Sirius A has visibly and unexplainably changed from a red giant star to a white dwarf within only a thousand-year period.¹¹ The star is evidently decaying on a time scale which is much shorter than current theory indicates. This finding is appropriately called a "Sirius problem"! The giant star Betelgeuse, among others, has also shown color changes during recorded history.¹² Such findings challenge the vast time scales assumed for the life cycle of stars, a time scale required by a big bang.

Even our own star, the sun, has recently raised serious questions about the assumptions of time and stellar energy. It has been taught for a half-century that the sun heats itself by way of nuclear fusion, converting hydrogen into helium. Such a reaction should also produce an intense flood of sub-atomic particles called neutrinos. Current experiments are underway to detect these solar neutrinos and verify the theoretical nuclear reactions. After ten years of careful searching, the result is that the particles cannot be found.¹³

Could it be that the sun is producing energy by some other mechanism than by nuclear fusion? The next most likely source of solar energy would be a gravitational contraction of the sun, first proposed by Helmholtz a century ago. Since this type of mechanism cannot possibly exist on a billion-year time scale, it has been totally rejected by modern astronomy.¹⁴ However, the problem of *missing neutrinos* may well be a testimony to a recent creation of the sun. Solar physicist John Eddy concludes:

I suspect that the sun is 4.5 billion years old. However, given some new and unexpected results to the contrary, and some time for frantic recalculation and theoretical readjustment, I suspect that we could live with Bishop Ussher's value for the age of the Earth and Sun. I don't think we have much in the way of observational evidence in astronomy to conflict with that.¹⁵

¹¹R. G. Kazmann, "It's About Time: 4.5 Billion Years," *Geotimes* 11 (September, 1978) 18.

¹²D. E. Thomsen, "Color Changes on a Scale of Centuries," *Science* 117:4 (January 26, 1980) 56. Cf. "A Very Rapidly Evolving Star," *Sky and Telescope* 59:6 (June, 1980) 462.

¹³B. G. Levi, "Solar-Neutrino Hunters Still Seek Explanation," *Physics Today* 31:12 (December, 1978) 19-20.

¹⁴Pananides and Arny, *Introductory Astronomy*, 255.

¹⁵Kazmann, "It's About Time: 4.5 Billion Years," 18. James Ussher (1581-1656), a brilliant Irish archbishop, concluded, on the basis of his analysis of biblical genealogies, that the world was created in 4004 B.C. For evidence that these genealogies may point to a somewhat earlier date for creation (perhaps 8,000-10,000 B.C.), see J. C. Whitcomb and H. M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood* (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1961) 474-89.

There is also a *missing explanation* for the initial formation of stars. Calculations originally done a century ago by the creationist scientist, James Clerk Maxwell, show that a gas cloud in space will simply not collapse by itself into a star.¹⁶ Instead, gas dissipates outward due to thermal pressure in accordance with the second law of thermodynamics, the universal tendency toward disorder. This is exactly what is observed for gaseous nebulas in space—they are spreading out rather than contracting.

To circumvent this natural formation problem, it is proposed that gases may be squeezed together by nearby exploding stars called supernovas.¹⁷ This interesting explanation says that stars form from stars! But if the universe began with a big bang explosion, how could the first stars possibly originate? Furthermore, supernovas are a rare phenomenon, unable to produce the vast number of stars visible. The last supernova observed in our galaxy was recorded by Kepler in 1604. This fundamental star origin problem extends even to the makeup of our own bodies. Big bang calculations show that only the simple elements hydrogen and helium could possibly form in space following such an explosion, and even then, only after 700,000 years!¹⁸ All the varieties of atoms other than hydrogen and helium can naturally form only within the cores of mature stars, assuming nuclear fusion is occurring. Thus, if a big bang cannot produce stars to begin with, it also cannot produce the atoms of which we ourselves are made up!

Biblical chronology fixes the creation of stars after the creation of the planet earth and before the creation of the human race, within a 24-hour period. Some have objected that Gen 1:16 does not state that the stars were “created” (**ברא**), but merely that they were “made” (**עשָׂה**). But this does not produce a significant distinction of meaning in the context of Genesis 1. The two terms are used interchangeably in creation contexts elsewhere. For example, marine creatures were “created” (**ברא**) on the fifth day, but land animals were “made” (**עשָׂה**) on the sixth day. Obviously, no distinction is intended.¹⁹

Biblical revelation points clearly to a *completed creation*, with no new materials or basic kinds of things being added from time to time.

¹⁶G. Mulfinger, “Critique of Stellar Evolution,” *Creation Research Society Quarterly* 7:1 (June, 1970) 7-24.

¹⁷W. Herbst and G. E. Assousa, “Supernovas and Star Formation,” *Scientific American* 241:2 (August, 1979) 138-45.

¹⁸H. L. Shipman, *Black Holes, Quasars, and the Universe* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1976) 232.

¹⁹Compare also Gen 1:26 with 1:27, Gen 2:4a with 2:4b, Gen 1:1 with Exod 20:11, and Gen 1:16 with Ps 148:3-5 and Isa 40:26 (where we learn that stars were “created”—**ברא**). For a more detailed analysis of this question, see J. C. Whitcomb and D. B.

"Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. And by the seventh day God completed His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made" (Gen 2:1-3; cf. Exod 20:8-11; 31:17). The author of Hebrews presupposes a literal interpretation of Gen 2:1-3 when he builds his argument for the necessity of entering into God's completed work of salvation (Heb 4:4, 10).²⁰

So far from evolving into higher and higher levels of cosmic complexity, the stars we observe appear to be slowly *dying out* one by one. As they exhaust their nuclear fuel, some stars contract into burned out cinders. Ones with a mass greater than 1.4 times that of the sun may die violently in infrequent supernova explosions. Still larger stars (3 or more times as heavy as the sun) may collapse without limit under the force of gravity. Calculations indicate that their size should decrease to that of the earth, then a baseball, and finally to a mere point!²¹ Thus, some stars *may* eventually collapse out of sight and into the speculative realm of *black holes* in space. Any object trespassing within the gravity grasp of such a black hole would be permanently captured. Do black holes really exist? Evidence remains uncertain; none have been clearly detected. However, the idea is in keeping with the observed rapid unwinding and decaying of all things in the universe.

All of this is in complete harmony with the inspired statements of the psalmist written 3000 years ago: "Of old, Thou didst found the earth; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. Even they will perish, but Thou dost endure; and all of them will wear out like a garment; like clothing, Thou wilt change them, and they will be changed" (Ps 102:25-26; quoted in Heb 1:10-12, cf. Luke 21:33). More than 200 years later, the prophet Isaiah confirmed this analysis of universal processes which we now describe in terms of the Second Law of Thermodynamics: "Lift up your eyes to the sky, then look to

DeYoung, *The Moon: Its Creation, Form and Significance* (Winona Lake, IN: BMH, 1978) 72, n. 31. For the theological significance of the creation of the sun and moon after the creation of life on the earth, see *ibid.*, 153-55. If the sun and moon were created after the earth, nothing is gained toward a harmonization of Genesis 1 with evolutionary cosmogonies by stretching the creation days to long ages. For biblical evidence for twenty-four-hour creation days, see *ibid.*, 76-83.

²⁰"The labors from which God rests are the works of creation; but he continues to be active in providence, in judgment, and in grace" (P. E. Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977] 161). Cf. R. C. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Hebrews/James* (Columbus, OH: Wartburg, 1946) 132, 133.

²¹Pananides and Arny, *Introductory Astronomy*, 266-67.

the earth beneath; for the sky will vanish like smoke, and the earth will wear out like a garment, and its inhabitants will die in like manner" (Isa 51:6a). Thus, the non-technical but completely accurate perspectives of Scripture combine with the detailed and prolonged empirical observations of science to contradict the evolutionary presuppositions of the currently popular big bang theory of the origin of the universe.

LIFE IN SPACE

An intense search is underway to find life in space. If this universe and life itself began with a spontaneous explosion, many then reason that life must also have arisen in countless other places. A typical astronomy text reads:

If any planet has surface conditions suitable or at least tolerable to any terrestrial organisms, life may be assumed to have developed there.²²

Even more dogmatic is the 1976 pronouncement of Robert K. G. Temple, author and researcher:

An attitude which asserts that man is the only intelligent life form in the universe is intolerably arrogant. Anyone holding such an opinion today is an intellectual freak.²³

Massive books have been written on the general subject of alien life in space, called exo-biology, without a shred of supporting data.²⁴ Man seems determined to prove that he is the result of blind chance rather than a special creation! For twenty years, radio telescopes have been searching deep space for intelligent signals. The results so far point to a final missing link in big bang cosmogony, namely, that of *no life in space*. Probes sent to the moon, Mars, Venus, and the moons of Jupiter have revealed hostile, sterile surfaces. Where is everybody? It is not surprising that there is a growing feeling among astronomers that man may be alone in the universe after all:

There is a deeply ingrained conviction in the great majority of mankind, to which the appeal of science fiction and fantasy bears witness, that the universe is so constituted that if an opportunity exists for life to originate, it will be actualized, and if an opportunity exists for hominids to evolve, that too will be actualized. Whatever may be the

²²V. A. Firsoff, *Mind and Galaxies* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1967) 58.

²³R. K. G. Temple as quoted by J. Oberg, "Alone Again: UFO Update," *Omni* 2:5 (Feb., 1980) 32.

²⁴C. Sagan and I. S. Shklovskii, *Intelligent Life in the Universe* (San Francisco: Holden-Day, 1966).

basis for such convictions, it clearly must be sought outside the domain of science. The most this study has been able to establish is that even the opportunity for such achievements occurs quite rarely among the vast profusion of forms in which matter is consolidated in the universe.²⁵

Could it be that life exists uniquely on the earth because God created it here and nowhere else?

Because of the obvious failure to find any evidence of intelligent physical life outside of the planet earth, a two-day symposium was held at the University of Maryland late in 1978 to explore the topic, "Implications of Our Failure to Observe Extra-Terrestrials." In an article describing this symposium, James Oberg commented that this topic "was bound to be provocative. For most of those attending, the implications were clear: since we haven't seen any trace of [extra-terrestrials], either they aren't there or there is something fundamentally wrong with our comprehension of the universe."²⁶

There are a number of biblical indications that point clearly in the direction of the absolute uniqueness of physical life on the earth. Psalm 115 focuses our attention upon the uniqueness of our God as creator and controller of the universe in total contrast to the man-made deities that characterize pagan religions. The Psalmist climaxes his message with this statement in v 16: "The heavens are the heavens of the Lord; but the earth He has given to the sons of men." A valid implication of this inspired statement is that those who truly know the Lord cannot possibly be threatened by anything that is in the universe beyond. In other words, the only "extra-terrestrial intelligence" men need to be deeply concerned about is the intelligence of God Himself, as revealed in his Word.

Isa 45:18 adds significant light to this fascinating question: "For thus says the Lord, Who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited), 'I am the Lord, and there is none else.'" Since the Hebrew word יְהוָה, translated here "a waste place," also appears in Gen 1:2, this statement in Isa 45:18 has frequently been used to support the so-called Gap Theory interpretation. This view maintains that God created an originally perfect earth (Gen 1:1), which later became "a waste place" because of the fall of Satan. Then, millions or billions of years later, the earth was re-created in six literal days. However, this is really not the thrust of Isaiah's statement. Isaiah is saying that God did not create the earth

²⁵W. G. Pollard, "The Prevalence of Earthlike Planets," *American Scientist* 67:7 (November-December, 1979) 653.

²⁶J. Oberg, "Alone Again: UFO Update," *Omni* 2:5 (Feb., 1980) 32.

to be a waste place, but created it to be inhabited (in contrast to all other planets). As we turn to Genesis chapter one, we discover that is the way the earth was created. It was not created to remain empty, but within six brief days to be fully inhabited.

In comparing the statement of Isa 45:18 with Gen 1:2, Edward J. Young comments:

Isaiah does not deny that the earth was once a *tohu*: his point is that the Lord did not create the earth to be a *tohu*, for an earth of *tohu* is one that cannot be inhabited, and has not fulfilled the purpose for which it was created. The purpose rather was that the earth might be inhabited.²⁷

If intelligent physical life exists only on the earth, the question must be asked, "Why do countless stars and galaxies exist throughout the universe? Many Christians have asked, "Why would God go to all the work of creating billions of galaxies and then put life on only one comparatively small planet?" In answer to this question, it must be recognized, first of all, that it required no more exertion of energy for God to create a trillion galaxies than to create one planet. "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary and to him who lacks might He increases power" (Isa 40:28-29).

God has condescended to give to men three basic reasons for his work of creating the stellar universe. "Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for light in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth" (Gen 1:14-15). The three stated purposes for the existence of the universe, as far as man is concerned, are: (1) signs, (2) a clock-calendar system, and (3) illumination by day and by night for earth dwellers. A fourth reason is conspicuous for its absence, namely, platforms for extra-terrestrial intelligent physical beings. The sign-value of the stellar universe is clearly emphasized in Psalm 8, Ps 19:1-2 and Rom 1:18-19. God apparently considers these three basic purposes sufficient for the creation of the stellar universe, and therefore it is unnecessary to multiply reasons beyond God's statement in Scripture.

²⁷E. J. Young, *Commentary on the Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 3. 211. Some commentators have questioned the meaning of "a waste place" for תֹהוּ in Isa 45:18, because the following verse demands the idea of "in vain" for this term. Young pointed out, however, that "despite this slight modification of connotation, it is correct to say that as God's creation was not for the purpose of being a *tohu*, so also His revelation is not a *tohu* but fulfills its purpose. The difference in connotation is not as great as at first sight appears" (3. 212).

The most significant biblical evidence for the uniqueness of life on the earth is the incarnation and Second Coming of Jesus Christ. The second person of the triune God, through whom the entire universe was brought into existence (John 1:1-3, Col 1:16-17, Heb 1:1-2), became a permanent member of the human race by incarnation (John 1:14). The staggering implication of this fact dare not be minimized by those who profess to be Bible-believing Christians. There is not a shred of evidence in Scripture that the first coming of Christ was a comparatively insignificant event in the career of the Son of God, stopping briefly on earth, as it were, on his way to other planets and galaxies to carry on a cosmic ministry of revelation and redemption. The great Creator who became our Savior also told us to pray: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven" (Matt 6:9-10). The earth, not some other planet, will be the location of Christ's Kingdom.

In isolation, not one of these biblical evidences is sufficient in itself to demonstrate the uniqueness of life on earth. However, in a book that professes to give to men all that is necessary for our understanding of life and the universe, it is highly significant that not one word is given that would support the concept of extra-terrestrial intelligent life. Secular scientism is haunted by the fear that we are totally alone in the universe. But this is not the biblical perspective at all. Many millions of spirit beings, called angels, are deeply involved in the affairs of men (e.g., Dan 10:20, Luke 20:36, Heb 1:14). Infinitely above all of these invisible and powerful creatures, however, is God, the creator of all things, who has revealed himself to men as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

God created men in such a way that they cannot find full and deep satisfaction apart from him. Utterly frustrated by the inequities and frustrations of this life, a psalmist by the name of Asaph entered into the sanctuary of God, and thus gained a totally new perspective on the world (Ps 73:17). He concluded with these inspired words: "With Thy counsel Thou wilt guide me, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And besides Thee, I desire nothing on earth" (Ps 73:24-25). The ultimate tragedy of cosmic evolutionism is that it virtually ignores the very God who created us to find our fulfillment in him alone. The secular scientific establishment, with its big bang cosmogony, has deliberately rejected the Christ "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col 2:3). In all of their vaunted brilliance, men are bypassing the Son of God "in whom all the fulness of the Deity dwells in bodily form," for "in Him," the apostle Paul asserts, "you have been made

complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority" (Col 2:9-10). To the Christian, the universe is not meaningless. We are not alone.

A THEISTIC BIG BANG?

The big bang theory, aside from the multiple problems of missing links in astronomy, clearly and directly contradicts the order of creation events in Genesis 1. Thus, there is no legitimate way of harmonizing the big bang theory with a Christian theistic view. Christian theism presupposes the authority and infallibility of the Bible. An honest and consistent application of hermeneutical principles in analyzing the biblical record of ultimate origins leads one to a complete impasse in accommodating it with the most popular cosmogonical theory of our generation. Theistic evolutionists speak much of God (or "a god"); but they apparently have not heard the clear message of his Word.

In contrast to the six-day creation period of Genesis, for example, the big-bang concept does not envision even such simple elements as hydrogen and helium appearing until about 700,000 years after the explosion. Stars did not form for perhaps another billion years. How can this be reconciled with the declaration of God that the planet earth was created *before* the stars? (Cf. n. 19.)

The big bang theory postpones man's appearance until twenty billion years of apparently purposeless natural processes have run their course. But the Genesis record depicts man as the true king of the earth at the very beginning of earth history, exercising dominion over all animals, including those in the depths of the seas (Gen 1:26-28; cf. Ps 8:5-8), within a matter of hours of their creation. Even the stars of the heavens antedated man by the space of only two days (Gen 1:19, 31; cf. Exod 20:11), for they had no independent purpose of existence. They were created for the Son of God (Col 1:16) and for those who have been created and renewed in his image (1 Cor 3:21-23; Col 3:10). They did not wait billions of years to accomplish what they were created for, namely, to serve as "signs" to men of God's creative wisdom (Gen 1:14; Rom 1:20). Only by denying the clear testimony of the chronological sequences of Genesis can one speak in terms of a "theistic big bang."²⁸

²⁸N. L. Geisler is one of several evangelical theologians who accept the "theistic big bang" concept. Geisler is convinced that "the big bang theory is in amazing accord with the creation account of Gen. 1:1," and feels that it provides "overwhelming scientific evidence for creation (as recorded in Gen. 1:1)." Review of R. Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers*, in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 22 (1979) 282-84.

CONCLUSION

A specific description of origins cannot be *proved* by science, whether a random explosion or a supernatural creation. The origin of the universe is a single past event. Thus, it is not subject to the scientific method of testing and reproducing. As God asked Job long ago, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth! Tell Me, if you have understanding" (Job 38:4). Today science is depended upon for a great variety of answers, including origins. However, there is much more at stake here than the latest temporary theories of man. A deep personal faith is required, either in a random big bang or in an orderly creation by the God of the universe. But these alternative faith commitments cannot be equal options for men who bear the image of God indelibly imprinted upon their innermost being. The God of creation simply will not allow himself to be compared with any other "deity," including evolutionary time/chance: "To whom then will you liken Me that I should be his equal?" says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created the stars, the One who leads forth their host by number. He calls them all by name; because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power . . ." (Isa 40:25-26).



AN INTERPRETIVE SURVEY: AUDIENCE REACTION QUOTATIONS IN JEREMIAH

RONALD E. MANAHAN

A striking feature of the Jeremiah material is the inclusion of numerous quotations attributed to the prophet's audience. A survey of these materials shows that these quotations, whether verbatim or "constructed" to reflect truthfully the collective expressions and sentiments of the audience, occur in four contexts: (1) accusation, (2) announcement, (3) personal confrontation, and (4) invitation. Study of these contexts demonstrates the degree and longevity of opposition to the prophet's ministry. The audience is depicted as overtly emphasizing Zion's inviolability and as unduly attached to externals (ark, temple, Law, king, etc.). Quotations of audience reaction in Jeremiah articulate the theological divergency of his audience. In every age the audience speaks its mind, declaring its theological tenets. Jeremiah knew what his audience said and spoke directly to the issues. Similarly the contemporary church must know and speak God's Word. The question is: What is the audience declaring today?

* * *

IN an earlier article this writer studied Jeremiah's employment of seemingly direct quotations of pseudoprophets.¹ In the process of that study, it also became apparent that the text of the book contained an even higher number of quotations, originating with the prophet's audience. These quotations serve as a major element in the audience reaction to Jeremiah's ministry. Overholt has recently estimated the number of such quotations to be "approximately 100 . . .

¹R. E. Manahan, "A Theology of Pseudoprophets: A Study in Jeremiah," *GTJ* 1 (1980) 77-96.

distributed fairly evenly throughout the book.”² So common a literary feature is deserving of serious study.³

What legitimate expectations might there be for such a study? One matter is certain: placing side by side the contrasting words of Jeremiah and his audience helps to clarify what theological issues were at stake in his era of history.⁴ Such knowledge helps to sensitize and elucidate nuances of meaning in the Jeremiah material that otherwise might have been unnoticed. This background information itself proves helpful for further study of the book.

Further, such study helps to identify what theological deviations led to the apostasy of Judah in her waning years.⁵ The audience spoke its mind, and what it said articulated its beliefs. Collation of these findings ought to furnish materials for understanding the essential tenets of popular theology. If this alone were the yield of this analysis, it would prove a worthwhile endeavor. Moreover, one may

²T. W. Overholt, “Jeremiah 2 and the Problem of ‘Audience Reaction,’ ” *CBQ* 41 (1979) 262. While from this writer’s study Overholt’s number appears to be a fair approximation, he nowhere cites the 100 or so references, nor does he indicate his definition of a quotation. Such a definition is necessary for the isolation and identification of quoted material.

³Even recent studies in other areas of research are indicating what valuable contributions can be made by analyzing audience reaction. In particular note J.-P. Van Noppen (“A Method for the Evaluation of Recipient Response,” *BT* 30 [1979] 301ff.) and a new work to be published by T. E. Gregory (*Vox Populi* [Columbus: Ohio State University, n.d.]). This latter work will maintain that it was not until the beginning of the present century that, largely as a result of the influence of Marxist thought, historians began to pay serious attention to the role of the crowd in antiquity.

⁴This point is maintained (though from a radically different perspective) in another context by R. Davidson (“Orthodoxy and the Prophetic Word,” *VT* 14 [1964] 408). He understands that an adequate exploration of the relationship between Yahweh’s word and the religious orthodoxy (for this writer, apostasy) of the day demands fulfillment of two conditions: “1) There must be a prophet locked in conflict with the religious establishment and providing us with sufficient information to sketch clearly the major issues at stake. 2) We must have access to the orthodox standpoint independent of that provided by the prophetic criticism.”

⁵That apostasy is the issue is indicated by Jeremiah’s use of מִשְׁׁוֹבֵחַ, meaning “faithlessness, defection, apostasy”; cf. W. L. Holladay (ed.), *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 218. Of the dozen occurrences of this term in the OT Jeremiah uses the term in 2:19; 3:6, 8, 11, 12, 22; 5:6; 8:5; 14:7. Of these usages, a recurring phrase is מִשְׁׁבָּח יִשְׁׁרָאֵל (NASB, “faithless Israel”; cf. 3:6, 8, 11, 12). This phrasing would indicate that rather early in his ministry Jeremiah understood the nature of the audience’s theological and experiential deviation. This, of course, is understood on the assumption that the section Jeremiah 1-20 generally represents the period of Josiah’s reign; cf. L. J. Wood, *The Prophets of Israel* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979) 339, who follows the lead of E. J. Young (*Introduction to the Old Testament*, 225-29). For an alternate viewpoint note R. K. Harrison (*Jeremiah and Lamentations* [Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries; Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1972] 33).

assume achievement of the above expectations to aid in understanding something of the very nature and method of theological deviation in any age. And just here the applicational nature of this study rests. What Jeremiah sensed and reacted to serves as forewarning that contemporary audience reaction may articulate its own popular theology, a theology out of sorts with historic orthodoxy.

But these expectations require at least a sense of the nature of the political environs of Jeremiah's age. His age was a political hurricane, enfolding in its swirl nations of less might and scattering political debris in unexpected ways. Judah found itself in the midst of the storm, political uncertainties all around. Jeremiah's book records the protracted agony of Judah's political fate. All this political agitation and uncertainty left its mark on the response of Jeremiah's hearers.⁶

The scope of this study prohibits any treatment of textual problems in the book of Jeremiah, unless they raise an interpretive question in relevant materials. There exist a number of more extensive treatments of textual matters relating to the book.⁷ Yet, the assumption is that the text must be taken seriously.⁸ When citing the English translation of the text, the NASB will be used unless otherwise noted.

METHODOLOGY FOR THIS STUDY

Definitions

An immediate concern of methodology is first to define important terms. In this study that must include a definition of "quotation" and "audience reaction."

⁶For a helpful summation of the political crisis note W. C. Klein ("Commentary on Jeremiah," *ATR* 45 [1963] 122). For an excellent treatment of the correlation between theological conceptions and the state of Judah note C. E. Tilson ("False Prophets in the Old Testament" [Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1951], especially pages 303ff.).

⁷Note especially J. Bright, *Jeremiah* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1965); and J. G. Janzen, *Studies in the Text of Jeremiah* (HSM 6; Cambridge: Harvard University, 1973). There are recent articles such as that of E. Tov ("Exegetical Notes on the Hebrew Vorlage of the LXX of Jeremiah 27 (34)," *ZAW* 91 [1979] 73-93).

⁸Of course, the underlying assumption of this paper is that the *corpus* of material that has come down to the contemporary world is the context for this investigation. The effort of this study is not to discuss the matter of the multitude of explanations for how this book came to be. Harrison (*Jeremiah and Lamentations*, 27) comments: "It is now increasingly realized that the extant writings of the prophets actually comprise anthologies of their utterances, and the book of Jeremiah is no exception to this general principle." Such being the case the text of Jeremiah has been searched time and again for clues as to possible sources for the material. Beginning with Duhm and

Quotation. Robert Gordis some time ago noted the difficulty in identifying quotations in the biblical record. Quite simply, "These quotations are naturally not indicated by a system of punctuation, which did not exist in ancient times, and often they may lack an introductory verb of speaking or thinking."⁹ The reader of the biblical record must supply quotation marks where the sense demands them. This, of course, demands careful attention to the sense of the passage and its intended structure within its context.¹⁰ Attendant to this rather complex task is the sobering matter of knowing if a given quotation is a verbatim citation of a speaker's actual words or the hearer's verbalization of the speaker's thought. Here again the surrounding of a text serves as the best guide for determining the nature of the *quoted* material.

Given these problems in identifying quotations, the reader must develop a definition of a quotation that will serve well in isolating quoted materials. Gordis suggests that a "quotation" refers to "words which do not reflect the present sentiments of the author of the literary composition in which they are found, but have been introduced by the author to convey the standpoint of another person or situation."¹¹ He understands this definition to include both actual words and thoughts of the speaker. Generally, his definition is workable.

But in the case of Jeremiah's book there is considerable textual help in aiding this broad definition. The book possesses numerous verbatim citations of speakers or verbalizations consistent with their thought. Such an abundance of material helps the interpreter more easily check his identification of a given quotation against numerous other instances in the same body of literature.

Another feature of the book is its insistence on clarifying the views of the audience. The book repeatedly articulates from Yahweh's perspective the pulse of audience thought and life. This helps one know what to *expect* the audience to say. This sensitizing to the theological tension between Jeremiah and his audience enables the

Mowinkel, attempts have followed (cf. *ibid.*, 27-34 for an adequate survey of more recent discussion on the authorship of the book). Note the casual way in which W. J. Horwitz ("Audience Reaction to Jeremiah," *CBQ* 32 [1970] 555) begins his article: "It is generally recognized that three major sources, designated A, B, and C, have preserved material from the prophet Jeremiah or concerning him."

⁹R. Gordis, *Poets, Prophets, and Sages: Essays in Biblical Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1971) 108-9. Cf. also Gordis, *The Book of God and Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1965) 169ff.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 109: "That the passage is indeed a quotation must be understood by the reader, who is called upon in Semitic literature to supply not only punctuation but vocalization as well."

¹¹*Ibid.*

contemporary reader to know where in the reading of the book a quotation is more likely to occur (as an example, 3:22-25). To reiterate, a quotation must be identified by a careful reading of the text, watching for textual indicators of quoted material. The reader of the book is aided by overt statements interpreting the nature of Jeremiah's hearers. This helps the reader know what content to expect in a quotation.

However, it is not always possible to determine if the quotation of the audience is intended to be a verbatim citation or a paraphrase of the speaker's thought. In fact, as Overholt points out, H. W. Wolff in his *Das Zitat im Prophetenspruch* observed "that quotations in the prophetic literature are usually attributed to groups of opponents, and are sometimes strange enough (e.g., the quotation of future words) to suggest that they are homiletical devices."¹² The attributing of a quotation to a group must be a rhetorical device in which the prophet constructs a "composite quotation" that truthfully represents the expressions of the audience.

A definition of "quotation" must include breadth enough for inclusion of both the author's direct citation of a speaker and construction of a "composite quotation" to reflect truthfully the collective expressions and sentiments of the audience. Above all, the definition must be accompanied by a rejection of any type of historicism that claims to identify infallibly all quotations, or finds quotations where context argues against, or in this case, finds quotations that argue against the interpretation of the audience given elsewhere in the book.¹³

Audience reaction. A definition of *audience reaction* is also necessary. Our present study understands that *audience* includes Jeremiah's contemporary countrymen and *reaction* further restricts the contemporary countrymen to those whose views counter Yahweh's as expressed through the prophet. This audience includes those who hold generally to the same theological perspective that might be termed a popular theology.

¹²Overholt, "Jeremiah 2 and the Problem of 'Audience Reaction,'" 263.

¹³By historicism is meant the process by which the text of Scripture is made to submit to the unyielding demands of a modern scientific historiography which fails or refuses to articulate its underlying presuppositions. Two examples of such tendencies toward wresting the Biblical text are *ibid.*, 108ff. (who hopes to find those verses, formerly thought incongruous, that may now be found congruous when understood as quotations) and Horwitz, "Audience Reaction to Jeremiah," 555-64. As evidence of his methodology Gordis cites direct quotations of speech by the subject, development of dialogue, direct quotations of the thoughts of the subject, prayers, quotations embodying the previous standpoint of thought of the speaker (which he may now have surrendered), citation of a hypothetical speech or thought, proverbial quotations, use of proverbial quotations as a text, contrasting proverbs, etc.

By this definition are excluded those instances where Jeremiah cites words that come from days other than his own.¹⁴ Also excluded are quotations of foreign peoples.¹⁵ Generally, these are of value in merely confirming the nuances of audience ideas expressed elsewhere. Further, this definition excludes quotations of those contemporary countrymen who may have taken Jeremiah's view or at least have been sympathetic to it.¹⁶ In addition to these exclusions is the quotation given in 10:19-20, where the speaker is the land personified.¹⁷ Moreover, those quotations where the prophet verbalizes on behalf of the nation are not included, since the views of the nation and the prophet are not concentric (cf. 4:10; 14:7-9, 13, 19-22).

¹⁴This means exclusion of those quotations recorded in 31:7, 18-19, 23, 29, 34. There is little doubt that the context of chap. 31 is future blessing for Yahweh's renewed people; cf. Harrison, *Jeremiah and Lamentations*, 135. V 7 mirrors a sharp contrast to the nation's comments in the days of Jeremiah (note for example 2:20; 6:16, 17; 22:21). And just so is the sentiment of 31:18-19. Also contrastive to what people of the exilic period must have uttered is the statement of 3:29 (*ibid.*, 137). Exilic peoples "felt that God was judging them unjustly for circumstances which were no fault of theirs." Added to this cluster of verses in chap. 31 are several other references that refer to the future. The passage in 3:16 indicates that one day the people will no longer say, "The ark of the covenant of the Lord," because in that day their concern will be over Yahweh's divine presence rather than the symbol of it (note *ibid.*, 66). However, this passage may have had a polemic use for Jeremiah's audience. Two passages, 16:14-15 and 23:7-8, substantially repeating each other, point out that, though God will cast his people into a foreign land (16:13) that is not the final end. Eventually once restored to the land they will have been furnished a more glorious substratum for the oath by Yahweh's name; cf. C. W. E. Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah* (Lange's Commentaries; New York: Scribner's, 1915) 159 and 209. The passage in 23:7-8 is the more difficult, made so by its omission between vv 6 and 8 and its inclusion at the end of the chapter in the LXX. On the whole, given the context of both passages, the altered substratum of the oath refers to the coming restoration of Yahweh's people.

¹⁵Quotations of this sort are those in 6:4; 12:16 (cf. 12:14); 39:12; 40:2-5; 46:8, 14, 16, 17; 48:2, 3, 14, 17, 19; 49:4, 29; 50:7, 46.

¹⁶An illustration of this type of quotation is that of 45:3 which recounts an utterance of Baruch whom T. W. Davies ("Baruch," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939], 1, 407) describes as the devoted friend and faithful attendant of the prophet Jeremiah. Also add to this passage the citations of the conversation of Elishama, Delaish, Elnathan, Gemariah, Zedekiah, and all the other officials (note 36:12) with Baruch. The quotations occur in 36:14, 15, 16, 17, 19. The context indicates these officials (at least the first three named above) were more kindly disposed to Baruch (and thus Jeremiah); cf. 36:25. Jer 36:24 does indicate that "the king and all his servants (וְכָל־עֲבָדָיו) who heard these words were not afraid, nor did they rend their garments." At first reading, this comment might include the individuals named above. But they are referred to as "officials" (שָׂרִים). The term "servants" would include still others who attended the king. Therefore, the comment of v 24 must be understood to exclude these officials. For a similar conclusion compare Naegelsbach (*The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 315): "By the servants of the king who 'heard all these words,' are here evidently to be understood those whose who heard them here for the first time, not those who had already heard them in the

Methodological approach

The chief concern here is with the method of collation to be used as one sifts through the quotations that can now be isolated by observing the above definitions. Of course, not every interpreter has suggested the same methodology.

Several alternatives. One could take Horwitz's suggestion that the method of collation for organizing these quotations is three-fold.¹⁸ There are replies in which the audience repeats Jeremiah's statements. Again, there are replies induced by Jeremiah's words. And again, there are quotations made by Jeremiah (or God) of retorts the audience had made. These three have much to commend themselves. Certainly it is possible to collate the quotations about such centers. However, the weakness remains that this method tends to focus on the context of the quotation especially, not specifically on what the quotation tells about the audience; to know of the audience is important. The method does not appear broad enough to analyze adequately the quotations of audience reactions.

An alternative is Crenshaw's suggested methodology of collation. For him, the organizational schema must denote what one might call the theological tenets of the audience. Thus, he concludes that there are six such tenets:

- . . . (1) confidence in God's faithfulness, (2) satisfaction with traditional religion, (3) defiance in the face of prophets who hold a different

secretary's office." Probably another quotation could be added to this category, 38:9, a citation of Ebed-melech, an Ethiopian eunuch. Though little is known of this individual, the citation does picture him as sympathetic to Jeremiah's needs; compare "Ebed-Melech," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939), 2. 890. Additionally there are the quotations of Gedaliah (40:9-10, 16), whom the biblical record treats in kindly fashion, and probably the ten of eighty men (41:8; cf. 41:5). And, though the nature of their religious correspondence to the viewpoint of Jeremiah cannot be known exactly (cf. 26:21), the citations in 26:16, 18-19 indicate that a number of people came to the defense of Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the judgment to fall on Jerusalem.

¹⁷Of this passage Naegelsbach (*The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 123) says: "That both these verses are the words of the country personified, is seen from 'my children,' etc., in ver. 20, for neither the prophet says this, nor the people, who are identical with the children and not forsaken, but forsaking.—*And I say*. In these words also we have a proof that the land is the speaker. For the words express no consciousness of guilt, but a comfort, which the innocent land alone could find, in the fact that a calamity is laid upon it, which must be borne." An interesting comparison with this passage is Jer 4:28.

¹⁸Horwitz, "Audience Reaction To Jeremiah," 559. One of his hopes by this method is to help establish, as Overholt ("Jeremiah 2 and the Problem of 'Audience Reaction,'" 262) says, "the historicity of the prophet's message of the inevitable destruction of the nation."

view, (4) despair when hope seems dead, (5) doubt as to the justice of God, and (6) historical pragmatism.¹⁹

Whereas Horwitz's method tends to isolate the settings of the quotations, Crenshaw's isolates the theological implications of the quotations themselves. But the latter lost something valuable, measuring a given quotation by its setting. It might yield insight for why the quotation was included at any given point in the text.

There are yet other alternative methods of collation. Overholt summarizes the three centers about which Wolff believed quotations could be collected:

... those expressing faithfully the opinions of the persons quoted, those transforming these opinions by means of exaggeration and irony, and words spoken in the future.²⁰

Then Overholt suggests his own method: examine "the form and rhetoric of the passages in which the quotations occur in an effort to describe where and how they are used in the prophet's speech."²¹ For him, this methodology will aid in the discussion of the functions of these quotations in the message of Jeremiah.

¹⁹J. L. Crenshaw, *Prophetic Conflict* (BZAW 124; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1971) 24ff. A. S. Van der Woude ("Micah In Dispute With the Pseudo-Prophets," *VT* 19 [1969] 246) maintains that the theological tenets of "Zion-theology" which characterized the audience can be known through a study of disputations between canonical prophets and pseudoprophets.

²⁰Note Overholt, "Jeremiah 2 and the Problem of 'Audience Reaction,'" 263. About these citations of the audience C. Westermann (*Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967] 59-61) points out that Wolff's investigation (*Das Zitat im Prophetenspruch*) "of the citation in the prophetic speech, i.e., of the words of other men which are cited by the prophets, confirms . . . that the prophetic speech forms a unity consisting of an announcement and its reason: 'Yahweh's word and deed are not arbitrary. At the outset a reason for the coming judgment is indicated by the prefatory disclosure of guilt which also takes place in the citation. . . . The citation is necessary because an altercation is demanded by the dispute between God and man. The speech that only gives an imperative about the future and does not contain an altercation with the hearer is thus actually unprophetic. . . . The citation is subject to the freedom of the prophetic proclamation. It is the instrument of his public speech. . . . Because of this it is impossible to make a strict distinction between authentic and inauthentic (i.e., composed by the prophet) citations. The citation does not belong to the realm of the "private experiences." Either the prophet has heard it in the street like other people, or . . . he has formulated the citation on the basis of his knowledge of the heart of the people. . . . The lawsuit procedure is the stylistic background of the prophetic citation. . . . With the citation, it is as though the prophet allows the accused to accuse themselves. . . . The regular place in the prophetic speech where the citation frequently recurs is in the reason for the judgment. It is the clearest form of the reason.'"

²¹Overholt, "Jeremiah 2 and the Problem of 'Audience Reaction,'" 264.

A proposal. The above summation of possible methodologies for interpreting audience response quotations indicates the need for a method that is able to deal with the "where" and the "what" of these citations. The method must describe where the citation is found, that is, concern itself with the context of the quotation. Jeremiah used citations, but in what contextual settings? Additionally, the method must focus attention on the "what," the actual content of the quotation. The question is: What does that content tell us of the religious ideas of Jeremiah's audience? This content sensitizes one to the central point(s) of tension between Jeremiah and his audience.

In the following discussion, attention will be given to the context in which these citations occur. The contexts vary and the location of the quotation within a given type of context varies. But always at the front is the sharp contrast between the prophet and his audience (the "how" of Jeremiah's method).

CONTEXTUAL SETTING OF QUOTATIONS

As the process of collecting quotations about various contextual centers begins, the interpreter must not overlook the danger of forcing disparate passages into the same category of context.²² However, where there is similarity of context, collating the various citations may be very helpful in understanding the uses to which these are put in the Jeremiah material. Centers of context about which these citations circulate seem to be four in number, three of which have large and nearly equal numbers of citations attached. These four are: Accusation, Announcement, Personal Confrontation, and Invitation. A fairly even distribution of these quotations exists throughout the book, ranging from chaps. 2 through 51.

Accusation

The study begins here simply because quotations in an accusation setting are principally found in the first half of the book.²³ By accusation is meant those passages which record the prophet's pressing home Yahweh's case against the audience. The burden of the case, though having multiple features, has but one purpose: to substantiate the charge of not complying with Yahweh's expectations.²⁴ The use of

²²Note a similar warning concerning the same forcing of the whole of prophetic speech patterns into a few categories in Westermann (*Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, 56-57).

²³The locations of quotations in the context of accusation are: 2:6, 8, 20, 23, 25, 27 (all 3), 31, 35 (first one in the verse); 5:2, 12-13, 19, 24; 6:14, 16, 17; 7:10; 8:6, 8, 11; 13:22; 16:10; 18:12; 22:14, 21; 23:17 (both), 25; 27:9, 14, 16.

²⁴Overholt ("Jeremiah 2 and the Problem of 'Audience Reaction,'" 264) follows the direction of K. Koch (*The Growth of the Biblical Tradition*), in understanding

quotations within this nucleus is three-fold: (1) quotations used as confirmation of the accusation, (2) quotations used as contrast to the accusation, and (3) quotations used as introduction to the accusation. But whatever placement a given quotation has within the accusation, the nuclear idea is present: Israel's failure to comply with Yahweh's expectations.²⁵ A survey of this three-fold usage follows.

Quotation as confirmation. Those passages where citations of this sort occur use the quotation as evidence to substantiate the accusation. From study of these passages, there appears a complex of seven distinct accusations in which quotations confirm the charge. In 2:6, as well as 2:31, the accusation of (1) ingratitude is brought against the audience. The first reference concerns what they did not say. The rhetorical question of v 5 introduces the citation.²⁶ Vv 5 and 6 together indicate that Yahweh faithfully provided for them through effective leadership. The expected reciprocation from Israel was to seek the very God who had so abundantly provided.²⁷ But that was what Israel had not done. They did not ask after him, implying that he had been forgotten. The second of these two references (2:31) also suggests the same element of ingratitude. The rhetorical questions

accusation as focusing on the relationship between Yahweh and the audience and as describing "a social, political, or religious situation that requires 'remedy and intervention by Yahweh.'" For further discussion of accusation note Westermann (*Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, 142ff.).

²⁵Typically accusation has been considered a part of the judgment speech. However, G. W. Ramsey ("Speech-Forms in Hebrew Law and Prophetic Oracles," *JBL* 96 [1977] 45-58) has argued that judgment speeches must be distinguished in form from complaint speeches which contain accusation but no "emphasis on forthcoming punishment" announcement. Ramsey also points out that as Yahweh presses his lawsuit against Israel, he acts "in accord with what is expected of a just suzerain" (*ibid.*, 57). The whole matter of the lawsuit as brought by the suzerain has gained considerable attention in the last two decades. For a recent discussion of this lawsuit (2:7) pattern cf. M. Weinfeld, "Ancient Near Eastern Patterns in Prophetic Literature," *VT* 27 (1977) 187ff. Further selected information on this matter and the whole issue of patterns from the Ancient Near East and their attendant contributions for understanding Old Testament prophecy: J. Cragin, "Mari and Its Prophets: The Contributions of Mari to the Understanding of Biblical Prophecy," *BTB* 5 (1975) 32-55; J. Holladay, "Assyrian Statecraft and the Prophets of Israel," *HTR* 63 (1970) 29-51; H. B. Huffmon "Prophecy in the Mari Letters," *BA* 31 (1968) 101-24; Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets," *JBL* 68 (1959) 285-95; W. Moran, "New Evidence From Mari on the History of Prophecy," *Bib* 50 (1969) 15-56; J. F. Ross, "Prophecy in Hamath, Israel, and Mari," *HTR* 63 (1970) 1-28; S. D. Walters, "Prophecy in Mari and Israel," *JBL* 89 (1970) 78-91.

²⁶Note W. A. Bruggeman, "Jeremiah's Use of Rhetorical Questions," *JBL* 92 (1973) 358-74.

²⁷Compare Laetsch, *Biblical Commentary: Jeremiah*, 36 and Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 31.

imply that Yahweh had not been a wilderness or a land of thick darkness.²⁸ Yet, Israel spurned his leadership, choosing instead to roam at her pleasure.

Quotations as confirmation are also used when an accusation is made of (2) defiling the land (2:8). Taken together, vv 7 and 8 indicate the religious leadership's failure to handle the law aright, because they did not know Yahweh. Thus they never asked, "Where is the Lord?" They did not seek his mouth (cf. Lev 10:11). The reproach of their failure (as teachers of the Law to seek from Yahweh's mouth) fell upon the land (2:7).

A third accusation is that of (3) defection. These quotations are found in 2:20, 25, 27; 5:24; and 8:6.²⁹ The composite picture of these citations is rebellion and overthrow. Israel's own words turn back on them as *evidence* of rebellion, the very accusation of Yahweh. Listen to their confirmatory words: "I will not serve" (2:20); "It is hopeless! No! For I have loved strangers, and after them I will walk" (2:25); "You are my father" (spoken to a tree, 2:27); "You gave me birth" (spoken to a stone, 2:27); "Arise and save us" (when all else fails, call upon Yahweh, 2:27); "Let us now fear the Lord our God, who gives rain in its season, both the autumn rain and the spring rain, who keeps for us the appointed weeks of the harvest" (this they did not say in their heart, 5:24); "What have I done?" (no man asked in repentence, 8:6).³⁰

A further use of quotation as confirmation is in the prophet's accusation of (4) lying (5:12-13). The implication of these words is that the people called lie the dire predictions of destruction uttered by true prophets. "Not He; misfortune will not come on us," says the audience. But Yahweh had not lied to them. They assumed too much! Two more uses of quotations as confirmation occur as the audience is accused of (5) folly (22:14; in this case Jehoiakim's folly) and (6) continuing obstinance (22:21; here the citation confirms their continuing habit of refusal).

A final use of quotations to confirm an accusation is in the case of false prophets who are accused of (7) falsification (6:14; 8:11; 23:17)

²⁸On the term here translated "thick darkness" (**מַפְלִיה**) cf. BDB, 66; and H. Freedman, *Jeremiah* (Soncino Books of the Bible; London: Soncino, 1949) 16 for brief discussions of this term.

²⁹This interpretation of 2:20 understands the verse to be read as NIV has it: "Long ago you broke off your yoke and tore off your bonds . . ."; for commentary and discussion on the pointing consult Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 27 (textual and grammatical n. 1) and Laetsch, *Biblical Commentary: Jeremiah*, 40 (Grammatical Notes).

³⁰That this latter reference is in the context of defection is made clear by the previous context.

[both]; 23:25; 27:9; 27:14; 27:16; 37:19).³¹ A cursory reading of these quotations confirms the accusation of falsification. These prophets declared that the audience *could* expect peace, that calamity would *not* come, that service under the enemy would *not* happen, and that even the absence of the temple vessels was of short duration. Alas, all was believable because the false prophets claimed, "I had a dream!" They had not stood in Yahweh's council and their predictions thus were false.³² The accusation of falsification is confirmed by the words these prophets spoke. None of what they spoke would happen.

Quotation as contrast. This usage (and the one to follow) is far less frequent in the accusation sections of the Jeremiah material. In this case the quotation is understood as a contrast to the accusation. Through use of this contrast the precise point of the accusation is sharpened and heightened. Four accusations are made in which the citation stands as a contrast.

There is the accusation of (1) guilt (2:23; 2:35). In 2:23 the audience reaction is that of innocence, but the accusation which continues in vv 24ff. corrects her false claim. No wonder the rhetorical question of 2:23 begins with, "How can you say . . . ?" The passage in 2:35 suggests that the audience continues insisting (imperfect) on their innocence, this in spite of their open, brazen sin (v 34). A further usage is in an accusation of (2) swearing falsely (5:2). The quotation indicates their readiness to make use of the most binding oath of all and in that very instance, therefore (גַּלְעָשׂ), swear falsely (גַּלְעָשׂ).³³ Moreover, a quotation as a contrast to an accusation of (3) ignorance of sin's consequence is used in 7:10 and of (4) ignorance of Yahweh's law in 8:8. In both cases the assumption of the audience is a stark contrast to the accusation. They reason that sin has no consequence; thus, "we are delivered." The law's presence means "we are wise." Their problem was that, while the law was present, they did not know the ordinance of Yahweh (8:7). Thus the rhetorical question of v 8, "How can you say . . . ?" Finally in 6:16 and 17 the quotation is used as evidence of (5) rejecting invitations offered.

Quotation as introduction. In this case, the quotation is used to initiate the accusation against the audience (5:19; 13:22; 16:10; 18:12).

³¹For a more complete interpretation of these false prophets note R. E. Manahan, "A Theology of Pseudoprophets: A Study in Jeremiah," *GTJ* 1 (1980) 79-81.

³²On this entire concept of falsehood in Jeremiah note T. W. Overholt, *The Threat of Falsehood* (Naperville: Allenson, 1970).

³³Compare Naegelsbach, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 69 for comments which reach the same conclusion. So Freedman (*Jeremiah*, 34) concludes: "Their oaths are false, even when supported by the most solemn mention of God's name."

The first three are cast in question form. Each raises the question of what the basis for judgment is. The question introduces a rather detailed accusation. In 18:12 a statement of the audience's insistence on following their own course introduces the accusation of vv 13ff.³⁴

Announcement

The burden of announcement is judgment and is the expected corollary to accusation. By announcement is meant that oracle of disaster sure to follow heavy on the heels of failure to comply with Yahweh's expectations.³⁵ While attention might be given to the recipient of the announcement (an individual or the nation) or to the content of the announcement (death, dispossession from the land, etc.), study might also be given to location within the announcement oracle. The several quotations within announcement oracles fall into two categories of location.³⁶ These citations appear to be used either to introduce the announcement or in some cases add an expansion to the announcement. A survey of these locations follows.

Quotation as introduction. Thirteen quotations seem to be used to introduce the announcement. Four of these are constructed rhetorically as questions: 13:12; 15:2; 23:33; and 33:24. All of these lead to a more complete discussion of judgment. The third of these issues in an announcement which, from vv 34-38, continues circulating about the phrase first introduced in v 33: "The oracle of the Lord." However, the introductory quotation in v 33 is immediately followed by the bold announcement: "I shall abandon you." The quotation of v 33 indicates the derision of the audience as they ask what new heavy, burdensome (**קַיִל**), not pleasing word had come from Yahweh.³⁷

³⁴In point of fact the quotation of 18:12 functions as a transition between invitation (end of v 11) and accusation in verse 13. The accusation builds on the quotation, "therefore" (**לְכֵן**, v 13).

³⁵Overholt, "Jeremiah 2 and the Problem of 'Audience Reaction,'" 264. For a more detailed discussion of announcement in terms of its introduction, form, content, contrast motif, sign etc., see Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*, 149-61. For an interesting study on a tangential treatment of announcement cf. D. R. Hillers, "A Convention In Hebrew Literature: The Reaction to Bad News," *ZAW* 77 (1965) 86-92.

³⁶This study understands that quotations within announcements are: 2:35 (the second of two); 4:5, 19-21, 31; 8:14-16a, 19, 20; 9:19; 13:12, 18; 15:2; 21:13; 22:18 (both); 23:33, 34, 35 (both), 38; 33:24; 34:5; 38:22; 42:13, 14; 44:25, 26; 51:34, 35 (both).

³⁷The use of word emphasizes the derision the audience held for words of woe, not weal, from Yahweh. Of course, the word could simply mean "pronouncement" (cf. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 217), but the context suggests the term should be understood in the sense of burden. Of the passage Naegelsbach (*The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 217) comments: "At all events the opposers emphasized the idea of burden. They wished to say that every

The last of these four (33:24) has been somewhat difficult to interpret, but the understanding here is that the nation of Israel is speaking and that “this people” may refer to that skeptical portion of the audience. “My people” would then refer to the whole of the nation.³⁸ The skepticism concerns whether Yahweh has kept faithfully his promise in choosing Israel and Judah. The announcement which follows is not ultimately of destruction but of weal: “I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them.” But upon the immediate audience it was an announcement of woe, since the weal will eventually follow a carrying off into captivity (**בָּבּוֹנְרַת**).³⁹

Besides these four references there is considerable variety in just what relationship the introductory quotation sustains to the crux of the announcement. The obstinacy evident in the citation in 44:25 brings on full force the prediction of judgment. In 2:35b the obstinate insistence of innocence brings on the prediction.

The passage in 29:15 uses an introductory quotation in a rather unusual way. A citation is made which indicates that members of the nation already in Babylon believed that true prophets were among them. These prophets could continue their predictions about Jerusalem so long as the city stood. But the announcement is that Jerusalem will not stand (vv 16-20). What then will those supposed prophets in Babylon prophesy about? They will be out of work!⁴⁰

In 51:34 and 35 (both) the citations lead to an announcement against Babylon. The speaker of these citations is Israel as she anguishes in her distress (the NIV punctuation is preferable). The citations of 22:18 indicate how lamentation over the passing of Jehoiakim will not be made. Silence over this sort of lament is

declaration of Jehovah was only a new burden, that only what was burdensome, not what was pleasing, came from this God. In so far the question was one of blasphemous derision.” There is also the matter of the LXX rendering of “What oracle” (or burden) by “You are the oracle” (v 33). This, however, does not alter the general interpretation of the passage.

³⁸For further discussion of this point note ibid., 296 and Freedman, *Jeremiah*, 229.

³⁹While there is some debate over the exact translation of the word **בָּבּוֹנְרַת** (cf. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 358), the statement “I will restore” (**בָּבּוֹנְרַת**, v 26) confirms the interpretation here offered. This latter form itself has been of some concern also (note apparatus).

⁴⁰On this passage Naegelsbach (*The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, 249) comments: “Hence also the prophecies of the false prophets dwelt above all on the continuance of Jerusalem. Even the present misfortune, the partial deportation of the people and the sacred vessels, although they had not predicted it, they could explain as a mere episode, which did not refute the main tenor of their promises, so long as Jerusalem and the temple were standing, and there were people in Jerusalem. Hence Jeremiah takes away the ground from under the feet of those false prophets, by predicting in vers. 16-20 the total destruction of the present population of Jerusalem, together with their king.”

appropriate to the announcement that "he will be buried with a donkey's burial" (v 19). The quotation of 13:18 graphically introduces the announcement of the ruination of regal symbols due to exile.

Quotation as expansion. Among the seventeen quotations used to expand and amplify in some way the essence of the announcement of judgment are those which picture alarm, sorrow, anguish, and even despair on the part of those who will be judged. Alarm among the recipients of judgment is portrayed by the quotations in 4:5 and 8:14-16a. Sorrow, anguish, and despair are graphically depicted in expansions of the announcement in 4:19-21, 31; 8:19, 20; and 9:19.⁴¹ The passages in 23:34, 35 (both), and 38 all in some way expand on the central idea of the audience's skeptical derision given in the introductory quotation in v 33. In a rather long announcement passage, the quotation of 21:13 functions as a means of identifying the audience as those who securely rest in their supposed invulnerability. However, Zedekiah, the king, is promised a humanitarian end, and the quotation serves as an expansion on that theme in 34:5.

The occurrence in 44:26 is a bit unexpected in the way the citation is employed to expand on the announcement. The quotation suggests that the oath will not be practiced (even falsely) because of the decimation of those men of Judah presently in Egypt (44:27). By citing what those men will not say, the quotation is intended to expand on the announcement: "All the men of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will meet their end by the sword and by famine until they are completely gone" (44:27).

Last, there are three quotations in 38:22 and 42:13, 14 which, for purposes of this survey, may conveniently be grouped together. All three are in the context of a conditional construction.⁴² In all three cases the audience faced a decision: What should we do about leaving? In these cases the quotations in their respective ways expand on the announcement of judgment.

Personal confrontation

The emphasis here falls on *personal*. These quotations are centered in passages where Jeremiah as prophet is pitted against opposition (of varying degrees). A number of quotations suggest (1) great

⁴¹This interpretation of 8:19 is contested by Bruggemann, "Jeremiah's Use of Rhetorical Questions," 362) who understands the rhetorical question to create "an entry for the accusation which asserts that the issue is not Yahweh's presence but Israel's lack of loyalty." The interpretation suggested in this study is that v 18 (note alternate translations of initial words) introduces the announcement that moves through v 22.

⁴²The construction is "if (וְיָמִין, 38:21 and 42:13) . . . participle . . . , then (וְיָמִין 38:22 and 42:15) . . ." Note GKC, 494-97. The first of these quotations (38:22) is placed in the

personal threats against Jeremiah. These locations are 11:19, 21; 12:4; 18:18; 20:10 (both); 26:8-9, 11; 29:26-28; 37:13; and 38:4.⁴³ Taken together, these quotations testify to the breadth, length, and depth of opposition to Jeremiah. That citizens from his hometown, the nation at large, friends, priests, false prophets, political officials, and even an exile all opposed him demonstrates the breadth of opposition. The length of that ill-feeling persisted throughout most of the prophet's ministry. And the depth of that ill-feeling is seen very plainly in reading the above references; they wanted his death.

Beyond this there are a number of (2) personal encounters with individuals. Most preeminently the encounters are with Zedekiah. The citations of this sort are 21:2; 32:3-5; 37:3, 9, 17, 19; 38:10, 14, 16, 19, and 24-26. In general terms, the portrait given of Zedekiah is of a man caught in all the turmoil of the age, caught with a faltering kingdom on his hands. Additionally, four quotations are given of Johanan, 40:14; 42:2-3, 5-6; and 43:2-3. In the mouth of Jehoiakim are put the words of one quotation (36:29; a quotation within a quotation), and in the mouth of Ishmael one quotation (41:6). The passages in 44:16-18 and 19 concern an encounter Jeremiah had with a group of men and women (note the message against which they reacted, 44:1-14). A last personal encounter in which a quotation is placed is that of Hananiah and Jeremiah in chap. 28.⁴⁴ Vv 2-4 recount the words of Hananiah. Clearly these words could have been grouped earlier with statements about false prophets, but considering the nature of the head-on confrontation of chap. 28, they belong in this category.

On three occasions, there are quotations in the context of (3) the prophet's seeming conflict with the ways of Yahweh (14:13, 15, and 17:15). The first two alternate between Jeremiah's attempted excuse for the people (false prophets are misleading them) and Yahweh's answer (he did not send those prophets to say what they had declared). Jeremiah's other conflict in which a quotation occurs is his complaint that the audience derisively asks to know where the word of Yahweh is (17:15).

apodosis, the last two quotations (42:13, 14) in the protasis. The construction itself suggests probability.

⁴³On 20:10 note the interpretation offered by W. L. Holladay, "The Covenant With the Patriarchs Overturned: Jeremiah's Intention In 'Terror On Every Side,'" *JBL* 91 (1972) 305-20 and D. L. Christensen, "'Terror On Every Side' In Jeremiah," *JBL* 92 (1973) 498-502.

⁴⁴For a study of this conflict note T. W. Overholst, "Jeremiah 27-29: The Question of False Prophecy," *JAAR* 35 (1967) 241-49.

Invitation

The materials within this last context of quoted material from the audience may be surveyed very briefly since the number of citations is few, three in fact. The first of these in 3:22b-25 appears to be a structured response from the audience at the invitation of Yahweh to return.⁴⁵ In the response, the audience is made to speak in words of repentance and sorrow over sins committed. Here provision is made for the audience to have an appropriate response, unfortunately, a response she never made. In 4:2, the quotation appears in the protasis of a conditional statement as one of the conditions to be met for those who truly return. They are to swear in truth and righteousness, not falsely. The "Temple Sermon" in chap. seven contains a quotation within the invitation with which the passage begins. They had falsely trusted in objects and externals. Those who amend their ways will be blessed with Yahweh's special presence in their midst.

This survey of the nearly one hundred quotations serves to indicate the context within which citations are made. The discussion now raises the question: What can be learned about the book's interpretation of the audience by studying the actual content of the quotations?

CONTENT OF THE QUOTATIONS

By now, certain ideas about the content of these numerous audience reaction quotations should be clear. Space does not permit any extensive treatment of each quotation. In fact, such would serve no particular purpose here. A general picture, however, of the audience begins to emerge from a survey of these quotations. The composite portrayal is telling and establishes some rather clear points of tension between the prophet and his audience. Other than the following could be said, but what follows must be said.⁴⁶

Opposition to the prophet's theology

Jeremiah had consistently maintained throughout his ministry that breaking Yahweh's stipulations was the reason for coming judgment. In the previous analysis of quotations in accusation sections the study indicated the prophet's charges that met with stiff

⁴⁵For an important interpretive note on 3:22ff. see Gordis, *Poets, Prophets, and Sages: Essays in Biblical Interpretation*, 116-17.

⁴⁶In addition to the three items cited attention could be called to the types of sins the audience committed or the nature of false prophets or the type of response to Yahweh's blessings.

opposition. The audience claimed innocence in the face of such charges (cf. 2:35 and 8:6). As Jeremiah attempted to call them back, they went their own way, insisting on their self-direction (cf. 2:20, 31; 6:16; etc.). So serious was the conflict between prophet and audience that they mocked him and wished his death (cf. 17:15 and 11:19; 18:18; 26:8-9; etc.). And this opposition lasts from beginning to end, so intense was it (cf. all of chap. 2 and 44:16-18, 19). In the face of such hostility, the question can rightfully be raised: What audience ideas led them in such reaction? The content of these quotations does not leave one wanting for an answer.

Emphasis on Zion's inviolability

More than a dozen passages scattered throughout the book indicate that the notion of Jerusalem's security stood at the heart of audience belief. Jeremiah had given clear assurances that covenant obedience would assure Jerusalem's continuance, and disobedience its collapse.⁴⁷ He called the audience to obedience.⁴⁸ But they did not obey. They insisted on Jerusalem's continuance (note 6:14; 7:10; 8:11; 12:4; 21:13; 23:17; 27:9, 14 and 37:19). And even after the Babylonians had staged attacks, the audience (represented by Hananiah in 28:2-4) continued insisting that Jerusalem was inviolable. Of course, they had to make a few adjustments in their analysis! Within *two years* things would be better! The audience was even aware that Micah had predicted the plowing of Zion (26:18). But that did not matter; the audience believed Zion could not fall. But why did they take this view?

Two passages may suggest an answer. The passage in 33:24 is interesting. Earlier, the interpretation given this verse was that skeptical Israel speaks, saying: "The two families which the Lord chose, He has rejected them." The audience here places fault squarely on Yahweh's failure to execute his choosing of them. Their degradation prohibited an alternative explanation. Could it be that in their minds the rise or fall of Zion was solely dependent on Yahweh's selection of it? Many years earlier Isaiah had recorded an interesting passage in this light. Hayes points out that Isaiah watched "the menace of the Assyrian army: 'There cometh a smoke out of the north, and there is no straggler in his ranks (Is. 14:31b).'"⁴⁹ Only one answer can be

⁴⁷ Important passages here are 17:21-25; 22:8-9; 23:5-6; 25:29; 26:18-21; 29:11; 32:23ff.; 33:19ff.; 35:15; 52:1ff.

⁴⁸ Cf. 11:3ff. and so throughout the book.

⁴⁹ See J. H. Hayes, "The Tradition of Zion's Inviolability," *JBL* 82 (1963) 424-25. However, agreement cannot be found with Hayes' later conclusion that "the tradition of Zion's election, associated with the bringing of the ark to the city and the building of

given to messengers who came demanding the city's surrender: "That the Lord hath founded Zion, and in her shall the afflicted of his people take refuge" (Isa 14:32).

The second of two quotations in Jeremiah which may give a clue concerning why the audience concluded Zion could not fall is in 5:12-13. Here the words "Not He; misfortune will not come on us" are of note. The opening words "Not He" (NASB) are translated "He will do nothing" in NIV. The expression לֹא־הִוָּא (לֹא־הַיְתָה) implies that such activity as misfortune (**רַעַת**) is somehow not part of what Yahweh would do. The suggestion is that the character of their God rejected such activity. Taking 33:24 and 5:12-13 together may suggest that the audience understood Zion as inviolable because Yahweh's choosing of her caused him never to act against her. Such activity against her would be utter inconsistency (contrast the singular expression of 26:18).

Tilson in his study has grappled with this situation of the audience. He concludes that out of a "basically religious understanding of Yahweh's protection, there evolved a political theory that may be termed 'the divine right of Israel to chart Yahweh's course for him.'"⁵⁰ The audience must have come to see Yahweh's very existence as a guarantee of their success.⁵¹ In summary, the audience reaction quotations in Jeremiah leave no doubt that the audience held tenaciously to Zion's inviolability as a central theological-political tenet.

Emphasis on externals

If Zion's continuance is not conditioned on covenantal obedience as Jeremiah declared, then what is the basis of its continuance? The audience understood Yahweh's selection as the basis. But how could the audience be assured of this selection?

the temple, was connected with pre-Davidic or non-Israelite traditions concerning the invulnerability of Jerusalem" (*ibid.*, 426). Cf. also the study of R. De Vaux, "Jerusalem and the Prophets," *Interpreting the Prophetic Tradition* (edited by Harry Orlinsky; Library of Biblical Studies; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1969), 275-300.

⁵⁰Tilson, "False Prophets In the Old Testament," 309. He continues: "Hard upon the heels of the belief that Yahweh was Palestine's special protector came the illogical, as well as irreligious and disastrous, deduction that he was its necessary protector. Simultaneous with the emergence of this solution to the religious-political puzzle, humble gratitude in the face of Yahweh's unspeakable grace began to give way to arrogant presumption upon his irrational prejudice."

⁵¹For Tilson such thinking on the part of the audience may be explained by the tendency of the audience to equate Yahweh's rule as coextensive with the landed area of Israel; he was a tribal god (*ibid.*, 303ff.). For further study on this general subject note F. C. Fensham, "Covenant, Promise and Expectation in the Bible," *TZ* 23 (1967) 305-22. Also note the attendant discussion of W. C. Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 152ff.

As part of the religious rationale, Jeremiah's audience considered externals to be evidence of this selection. Externals became necessary to legitimate this selection. Should the externals be taken away, the selection was invalidated. What were these externals?

Several quotations of the audience clarify at least certain of these externals. The citation in 3:16 is in the context of change which the people will undergo. The change will be that the ark's significance will be outshone by the presence of Yahweh.⁵² That this contrast is picked to depict the change may indicate that the mention of the ark was polemical. This would be especially so if the ark had comprised one of the externals to which the audience had given their loyalties.⁵³

In 7:4 little doubt is left that another of the externals was the presence of the temple. The audience must have concluded that the temple's presence was in some sense a guarantee of their blessing from Yahweh's hand. The presence of the Law may have been another external (8:8). In 8:19 the external seems to be the presence of the dynasty. If there is a king, good! Even the vessels had some external significance for the audience (27:16 and 28:3).⁵⁴ And, perhaps, even prophets (so long as some externals existed in Zion) could be external rationalizations (29:15, compare with 16-20). Externals became signs of Yahweh's selection of Zion and its continuance.

CONCLUSION

In the foregoing survey, an attempt has been made to establish something of the context and content of audience reaction quotations in Jeremiah. The study has yielded several important points.

The point of theological tension between Jeremiah and his audience is rather clear. Whereas Jeremiah had insisted on conformity to covenantal stipulations, the audience had insisted on Zion's right to exist. The prophet insisted that Zion's collapse resulted from the audience's disobedience. The audience accused Jeremiah of lying because Zion was inviolable. Understanding this tension helps to interpret both the book and the man. Certain points of conflict were at stake. These become part of the milieu of Jeremiah.

Audience reaction indicates the several elements of theological divergency. It is a theology of presumption, one that is "para-covenantal" (Yahweh had chosen!). But it was one which substituted

⁵²Cf. M. Weinfeld ("Jeremiah and the Spiritual Metamorphosis of Israel," *ZAW* 88 [1976] 26ff.) for a discussion of this passage, especially his notations on its dating.

⁵³For a study on the history of the presence of the ark note M. Haran, "The Disappearance of the Ark," *IEJ* 13 (1963) 46-58, but especially 51.

⁵⁴Note the study of P. R. Ackroyd, "The Temple Vessels—A continuity theme," *Studies in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (SVT 22; Leiden: Brill, 1972) 166-81.

externals for covenantal obligation. This derangement insidiously kept the audience from perceiving clearly the realities of the Babylonian threat.

And this survey reminds that audience reaction now, as then, speaks its mind, declares its theological tenets. Jeremiah knew what the audience said and spoke directly to the issues at stake. Similarly the contemporary church must know and carefully speak God's Word as did Jeremiah. What is audience reaction saying today? And is the Word faithfully spoken?



THE MAN CHRIST JESUS

IVAN H. FRENCH

ANY study of a single facet of the complex person of Christ requires a statement of limitations and assumptions. This paper on the humanity of our Lord assumes the fact of two complete natures in Christ. He was complete Deity, the One in whom dwelt "the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col 2:9), the eternal Word made flesh (John 1:14). A real self-emptying of the eternal Son in the incarnation also is assumed (Phil 2:5-8). In Jesus Christ incarnate there dwelt full deity and complete sinless humanity. When the eternal Son joined himself to a real human nature, he laid aside the independent exercise of his divine attributes, while retaining full possession of them. It is a basic maxim of this study that there is a distinction between the *possession* and the *exercise* of an attribute. While Christ never ceased to be God, thus retaining the full possession of His attributes, he did voluntarily lay aside the exercise of those attributes of power and omniscience so that he might become truly man. *Dependence* is a necessary characteristic of real humanity. The testimony of the NT, particularly the narrative of the four Gospels, presents a consistent picture of a true man, walking in dependence upon his heavenly Father.

The church was still in her infancy when the idea was advanced that Jesus Christ did not have a real body, hence, was not fully human. The proponents of this view insisted that the body of Jesus was only an appearance, an apparition. This was arrived at following the basic Gnostic presuppositions that spirit is good and matter is evil. It was evident, even to them, that Christ was a good man; therefore, they reasoned that his body could not be real matter since matter is evil. A distinguished bishop of Laodicea, Apollinaris, taught that while Christ possessed a true human body and soul, the human spirit in him was replaced by the eternal Son, or Logos. This view was intended to protect the full deity of Christ, but it left him with an incomplete humanity. The principal objection to the position is that "if there is no complete manhood in Christ, he is not a perfect

example for us, nor did he redeem the whole of human nature but only its spiritual elements.”¹

It was largely to answer this heresy in its various forms that the early writers and preachers declared forthrightly the real and complete humanity of Jesus. Earnest attempts to wrestle with the exceedingly complex problem of real humanity joined to full deity in one undivided Person were not always satisfactory in their outcome. Finally, at the Council of Chalcedon, in A.D. 451, a statement was drawn which was to become the accepted definition in the orthodox catholic church.

Therefore, following the holy Fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance (*όμοούσιος*) with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer (*θεοτόκος*); one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence (*ὑπόστασις*), not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us.²

GENUINE HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS

While this noble statement declares the *fact* of Christ’s humanity and its relation to his deity, it neither explains the implications of that humanity nor grapples with the problems raised by it. This is not stated critically, only factually. Those good men of the fifth century were discovering important truth progressively and it would remain for others to deal with matters raised by their conclusions.

The statements of the Chalcedonian confession that Christ was “complete in manhood” and “of one substance with us as regards his

¹F. L. Cross, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (London: Oxford University, 1958) 70.

²Henry Bettenson, ed., *Documents of the Christian Church* (2nd ed.; London: Oxford University, 1963) 73.

manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin" are derived from solid scriptural data. An examination of pertinent passages reveals the following concerning Christ's humanity.

A human birth

While the conception of Christ was clearly miraculous, accomplished by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-35), his birth was normal in every respect as far as the physical aspects are concerned. It took place only after the regular gestation period. The unusual external situation which emphasizes the poverty of his earthly circumstances (Luke 2:1-20) also brings into clearer focus the fact that the entrance of the Son of God into humanity was by way of regular physical birth. There is no reason to think that Mary did not suffer labor pains and the miseries of delivering a child that are common to all women. Luther's Christmas hymn declares that the "little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes," but that is of doubtful accuracy. Joseph tenderly ministered to his wife who had delivered a real baby. When the shepherds came in from the plains of Bethlehem they saw a real human baby. However deep the mysteries involved, it must be insisted on the basis of the biblical record that the Son of God came into our humanity via a genuine human birth.

Human growth and development

The record is equally clear that Jesus developed and grew as other children do. "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him . . . And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:40, 52). This is surely one of the unsearchable things of biblical revelation. But revelation it is—that Jesus, the God-man, grew and developed and made progress in the physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of his being. No doubt his first teaching in truth and wisdom came from the lips of his mother. As all Jewish boys did, he attended the synagogue schools in Nazareth, mastering the principles of reading and writing under the guidance of real human teachers. His mind was keen and alert because it was unhampered by sin. Indeed, so amazing was that mental development that by the time he was twelve years of age his questions and answers astounded the scholars in the Temple at Jerusalem. Through the adolescent years, he was absorbing the lessons of nature, business, culture, and social intercourse that were to appear so strikingly in the teaching of future years. This whole subject, though much hidden from our view, is most intriguing and not without profit as we consider him of whom it is said that "in *all things* it behooved Him to

be made like unto his brethren" (Heb 2:17), and that he was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15). But the point is that he did grow, he did increase in knowledge, he did develop in a genuinely human way.

Human ancestry

Furthermore, the fact of Jesus' human ancestry is made clear in Scripture. Matthew and Luke provide us with records of his human lineage, the one tracing it through Joseph back to Abraham through David to establish his legal rights to the throne of Israel, the other through Mary all the way to Adam to establish his true connection with the human race. In spite of attempts to prove otherwise, it seems clear that he had half-brothers and sisters and therefore knew the stresses as well as the joys of family life. His brothers are named in Mark 6:3. The historical record of the four Gospels give ample support to Paul's declaration that Jesus was "made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom 1:3).

Human appearance

There is no hint anywhere in Scripture that Jesus appeared to the physical sight as anything less than genuinely human. When he met the woman at the well, she was immediately aware that she was talking to a Jew (John 4:9). Indeed, the Gospel records are consistent in their presentation of a man who taught the Jews in the Temple and on the countryside, a man who performed miracles that amazed the multitudes, a man who was arrested and tried and crucified. It was a *man* who appeared to more than 500 people on various occasions after the resurrection. Mary thought he was the gardener. The disciples on the road to Emmaus did not recognize him at first, but they were fully aware that they were talking to a man. In fact, they thought he must be the only visitor in Jerusalem who had not heard of the strange circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the body of the crucified prophet from Nazareth (Luke 24:13-24). No suggestion can be found that the Jesus of the Bible was an apparition or a mere appearance.

Human experiences

The emotions, feelings, desires, and needs that are ascribed to Jesus in the Gospel records point unerringly to His full and complete humanity. He became hungry (Mark 11:12) as all other men do when they go without food for a time. When he hung on the cross, the awful dehydration produced by that inhuman manner of execution wrung from his lips a cry of thirst (John 19:28). After a long walk in

the hot sun, he was weary (John 4:6). He felt the sorrow caused by death, for when he stood at the tomb of Lazarus, he wept (John 11:35). It is a part of genuine humanity to feel a special love for special people. This seems to account for our Lord's feelings for the little family at Bethany where he often found rest and refreshment (John 11:5).

As he moved ever closer to the awful cross experience, his real humanity is clearly seen. When he faced the struggles of Gethsemane, he craved human sympathy and support (Matt 26:36-40). While the agony of the garden experience is bathed with the profoundest mystery, it seems certain that he was recoiling from suffering. His "if it be possible let this cup pass from me" is not a suggestion of rebellion against his Father's will, but is a genuinely human, sinless revulsion to anticipated suffering. Any man avoids suffering if he can. Jesus knew what lay ahead for him on the cross, and in keeping with the humanity with which he was identified, longed for some deliverance from the unspeakable miseries. But there was to be no deliverance, and in full recognition of this, he uttered that noblest of all prayers, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt 26:39).

Students and theologians have for centuries pondered the cry of Jesus, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The implications of the question are deep and weighty, but surely the "Why? . . ." is one of the supreme evidences of the genuine humanity of Jesus. It is most natural for a man in the midst of excruciating pain to ask such a question. It does not reflect rebellion against the will of God, nor does it suggest a lack of knowledge. But it is the outcry of a mind and body and spirit that is being seared by the fires of suffering. While in the case of a sinful man, such a question can be the expression of rebellion or doubt, it is not always so. And in the case of the one in whom is no sin, the cry is the most piercing reminder that the one hanging on that central cross was in no degree deficient in the essential elements of humanity.

A human will

The exercise of intelligent volition is one of the characteristics of humanity. If, therefore, it could be demonstrated that Jesus did not possess a genuine human will, there would be a good argument for the incompleteness of his humanity. But such a demonstration is quite impossible. H. D. McDonald has pointed this out:

It seems impossible to doubt, in the light of His own declarations, that Jesus had a will of His own (Matt. 26:39). It is clear that not only was His will moved by appropriate considerations as is ours (John 7:1-10), but also that it displayed the same activities and operated by the same forces as are common to all men. Throughout His life in the flesh there

were occasions when He had to steel Himself with purpose of will against temptations and to set His face as a flint to the fulfillment of His vocation. What have been called the virtues of the will are particularly exemplified by the steadfastness and persistence with which He continued (Matt. 16:22) and the consistent hostility of His enemies (Matt. 12:14; Mark 11:18).³

A reading of the Gospel narratives from the standpoint of human psychology secures the fact that Jesus possessed all those traits which are fundamental requirements of genuine, complete humanity.

A human relationship with God

Jesus on one occasion declared that "men ought always to pray and not to faint." He thus made clear that prayer is a necessary activity of a man who stands in a right relation to God. It is not surprising, therefore, that the same Gospel records which present Jesus as a man in every other respect also emphasize His prayer life. He prayed before making important decisions (Luke 6:12); after passing through a crisis experience (John 6:15, cf. Matt 14:23); in the presence of his disciples (Luke 11:1); before performing miracles (John 11:41-42); in the presence of a mixed crowd (John 12:28-30); in the solitude of Gethsemane (Matt 26:36-44); and in the midst of his agony on the cross (Luke 23:34).

The question has been often asked, "If Jesus was indeed fully God, why did he pray to God?" If the scriptural record can be read candidly, we must insist that Jesus prayed because he *needed* to pray. His praying was not a charade or play-acting; it meant something. He prayed not just to give a model to be copied by his disciples; he prayed because he belonged to that species, man, of whom it is said that they "ought . . . to pray." He sought refuge under the shadow of the Almighty. He renewed his innermost being in the strength of God and found courage for the ordeals of living in his very real confidence in his Father. He prayed because he was a man—fully and genuinely man.

A PERFECT HUMANITY

There is no question that the portrait of Jesus of Nazareth found in the Gospels is of a strangely solitary figure. There has never been another like him. He stands on the pages of history a unique and seemingly unaccountable person. On one occasion, his disciples asked,

³H. D. McDonald, *Jesus—Human and Divine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1968) 16.

"What manner of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey him?" (Matt 8:27; Mark 4:41; Luke 8:25). He had just quieted the raging storm on the Sea of Galilee by the spoken word. His companions saw that there was something strange and unique about this one with whom they had cast their lot. For the present discussion we might well place the emphasis in their question on the word "man." "What manner of *man* is this . . . ?"

The solitariness of Jesus lay not so much in the fact of his real humanity, or in his complete humanity, but in his *perfect* humanity. There was no flaw in him.

The Apostle Peter, who had occasion to know him well, describes him as "the Holy One of God" (John 6:60), and affirms that he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pet 22:2). The Apostle John declares that "In him is no sin" (1 John 3:5). The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (7:26), that he was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (4:15), and that he "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God" (9:14). Paul's testimony is that he "knew no sin" (2 Cor 5:21). The angel Gabriel, in announcing to Mary that she was to become the mother of Jesus, said, "That *holy* thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

There are other witnesses to Christ's sinlessness. Judas Iscariot (Matt 27:4), Pontius Pilate (Matt 27:24), Pilate's wife (Matt 27:19), one of the thieves who was crucified with him (Luke 23:41), and the Roman centurion who presided at the death of Jesus (Matt 27:54), all add their testimony to the fact that no sin or wrong marred the character of Jesus.

More important than any of these, however, is the testimony of Jesus himself that he was sinless and therefore perfect in his humanity. "I do always those things that please the Father" (John 8:29). To his enemies, he threw out the challenge, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46). As he prayed on the night before his death, he said boldly to his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). Nowhere in all the accounts of his life and ministry does Jesus ever betray the slightest consciousness of sin.

Often overlooked in this connection is the testimony of the Father to the sinlessness of his Son. As Jesus was leaving the obscurity of his life in Nazareth, he presented himself to John the Baptist at the Jordan to be baptized, thus identifying himself with the people he came to save. As he was coming up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon him in a visible form like a dove, "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I

am well pleased" (Matt 3:17). As the Father looked back over the first 30 years of Jesus' life, he was pleased. The temptations of the wicked little city of Nazareth, the stresses of growing up in the company of sinful brothers and sisters, and pressures of being the family breadwinner after his foster father died—none of these had left the slightest strain upon his character. The verdict of the holy God in heaven over all those 30 years was, "I am well pleased."

The perfection of Jesus' humanity included his body. We do not know precisely what Jesus looked like, but the evidence is that he was a strong, robust man. Sanders asserts that

Never in human history were physical frame and nervous system called upon to endure such unremitting strain as that imposed on our Lord during the three years of public ministry which climaxed in the cross. Only a physically perfect constitution could have supported such unceasing activity and expenditure of nervous force. When it was recorded on one occasion that "He perceived that virtue had gone out of Him", we are given an indication of the cost at which all of His ministry was carried out. The physical effort alone was prodigious. His recorded journeys during the three years—and there is no reason to believe that all His journeys are included—cover at least two thousand five hundred miles travelled on foot. He was usually thronged with people, and always preaching, teaching, and healing.⁴

He does not seem to have suffered from illness. This is to be expected, for illness is the precursor of death and death finds its ultimate cause in sin (Rom 5:12). There was a certain physical robustness about him which made it possible for him to face throngs of people constantly during the daylight hours and spend long nights in prayer.

It needs to be emphasized repeatedly that sin is not a necessary part of real humanity. Adam was a real man before he sinned. Sin is a Satanic intrusion and a blight upon humanity as God intended it to be. That blight was not found in Jesus Christ. The sinlessness of Jesus declares the absolute perfection of his humanity.

THE PROBLEMS RAISED

It is one of the basic presuppositions of this study and one of the great teachings of the NT that Jesus Christ is God. That being so, it follows that he was God during the days of his earthly life, for God cannot change in any of his attributes and remain God.

It is also true that Jesus Christ is man—true man and complete man. When the eternal Son of God became incarnate, he took upon

⁴J. Oswald Sanders, *The Incomparable Christ* (Chicago: Moody, 1971) 47.

himself all the necessary characteristics of full humanity. But it was perfect humanity—not even his worst enemies could fault his character (John 8:46). Either a casual or careful reading of the four Gospels leave one with the decided conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was a *man*.

This raises some questions that are certainly theological in nature but very practical in their ramifications. Was the humanity of Jesus perfect because it was joined to deity? Or are the expressions of human feelings, limitations, attitudes, and emotions to be seen as functioning apart from the control of his divine nature? Must his successful resistance of temptation be accounted for by the union of the two natures in one person? If so, then is it fair to command believers to “walk as he walked” (1 John 2:6), when our human nature is not joined to deity?

There were many times when Jesus had to face temptation in addition to the wilderness experience. For thirty years in his Nazareth home he faced the daily decisions and tests of growing from boyhood to adolescence to mature responsibility. He was part of the life of a very real family. He apparently had the responsibilities of family breadwinner after the death of Joseph and faced the challenges in the carpenter’s trade of doing good work, pleasing his customers, handling himself in the rough-and-tumble world of business. Only in this way could he “in all things . . . be made like unto his brethren” (Heb 2:17). The perfection of his actions and reactions of those years is attested by the Father’s voice at the Jordan, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased” (Matt 3:17).

The four Gospels give us just a fraction of the deeds and words of Jesus during the three and one-half years of ministry. Yet there is abundant evidence that he constantly faced decisions and always made the right decision. Mary apparently wanted him to reveal his full identity at the wedding at Cana; Jesus chose to reject her veiled request (John 2:1-4). On another occasion his family, with apparently good intentions, tried to get him to “slow down” in his labors, fearing that he was working too hard (Mark 3:31-35). He chose to reject their appeal, using the occasion to teach the supremacy of spiritual relationships over family relationships. After he had fed five thousand people with a few loaves and fishes, the crowd sought to take him and proclaim him king (John 6:15). He chose not to entertain for a moment any thoughts of an earthly rule at that time and removed himself from the multitude.

His ministry was marked with the repeated necessity of making choices, and he always made the right choice. Of all men who ever lived, he alone could say, “I do always those things that please the Father” (John 8:29). These choices were very real and involved the

exercise of his will. Was it his human will alone functioning on these occasions or was his human will under the control of the divine nature? If the latter is true, then it is hard to see how Christians, who do not possess deity to control their human wills, can be called upon to look to Christ as their example. But if Jesus Christ did indeed divest himself of the *exercise* of the divine nature and lived among men in real dependence upon his Father and found his strength and wisdom in a pure humanity empowered by the Holy Spirit, then we can understand that his prayers were real prayers, his decisions were real decisions, his actions and reactions were genuinely human, and he is indeed our example in all things.

The portrait of Jesus Christ painted by the four evangelists is the portrait of a man. This brings him very close to us sinners. This man who is so much like us—apart from sin—is attractive. He has experienced our sorrows, our pains, our disappointments and frustrations. And he has overcome them and demonstrated to us how we, too, may overcome. Recently, the author asked a young seminary student how he had come to trust in Christ. He had been a student in a prestigious eastern university. Some Christian friends challenged him to read the Gospels. He said, "I started reading, and somewhere between the beginning of Luke and the end of John, I trusted Him." The compelling winsomeness of the man Christ Jesus has been used by the Holy Spirit to draw multitudes to him, and the efficacy of the death of that great God-Man has saved them eternally. His death was the consummation of a career that was truly human.

The night was long, and the shadows spread
As far as the eye could see;
I stretched my hands to a human Christ,
And He walked through the dark with me!
Out of the dimness at last we came,
Our feet on the dawn-warmed sod;
And I saw by the light of His wondrous eyes
I walked with the Son of God.

H. W. BEECHER

EPHESIANS 2:3c AND *PECCATUM ORIGINALE*

DAVID L. TURNER

INTRODUCTION

THE student of hamartiology soon discovers that Eph 2:3c is a standard proof text for and often occurs in the various presentations of original sin (*peccatum originale* or *habituale*). It may well be that after Rom 5:12-21 this passage is the most important in the NT on this doctrine. All branches of Christendom, including Reformed, Lutheran, Anglican, Arminian, and Roman Catholic¹ have depended

¹Reformed: The Calvinistic theologians normally view this verse as asserting hereditary depravity. See for example: Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1941) 240; John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (LCC 20, 21; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), I. 249, 254; 2. 1340; R. L. Dabney, *Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976 reprint) 328, 341; Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975 reprint), 2. 243-44; W. G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology* (3 vols.; reprinted; Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, 1979), 2. 217-19; and A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1907) 578-79. See also the Westminster Confession (6:4) and Shorter Catechism (Question 18): *The Confession of Faith* (Halkirk, Caithness: Publications Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, 1962 reprint) 40, 290. Lutheran: It is evident that Martin Luther viewed Eph 2:3c as support for hereditary sin. For brief citations from Luther and references to relevant passages see E. W. Plass, ed., *What Luther Says* (3 vols.; St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), 3. 1295, 1300, 1361 (#4151, 4167, 4385). See also article 2 of the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord (I. 1-3) in the *Concordia Triglot: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1921) 44, 105, 779. The Lutheran theologian Francis Pieper also views Eph 2:3c in this manner. See his *Christian Dogmatics* (4 vols.; St. Louis: Concordia, 1950), I. 427, 528, 530, 542. Anglican: While the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England do not contain proof texts, the language of Article 9 shows that its framers understood original sin to refer to "the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam." This definition implies a reference to Eph 2:3c. For an exposition of the conservative Anglican view, see Gilbert Burnet, *An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England*, rev. by J. R. Page (London: Scott, Webster, and Geary, 1837) 139-51 and W. H. Griffith-Thomas, *The Principles of Theology: An Introduction to the Thirty-nine Articles* (6th ed.; London: Vine Books, 1978) 155-75. Arminian: Theologians such as Miley and Sheldon spend considerable time with Eph 2:3c. While they admit "original sin," they deny that man is held responsible or guilty because of it. See John Miley, *Systematic Theology* (2 vols.; New York: Eaton and Mains, 1892), I. 512;

upon this passage in formulating their hamartiological positions. There are those, however, who deny that this passage has any relevance to original sin.² Their arguments are not to be taken lightly. The purpose of this paper is to determine whether Eph 2:3c actually supports the concept of original sin, and if so, what that contribution is.

One point of definition must be clarified first: this paper deals with original sin proper rather than the broader area of man's depravity. Kuehner thus explains this term:

It is so named because (1) it is derived from the original root of mankind; (2) it is present in each individual from the time of his birth; (3) it is the inward root of all actual sins that defile the life of man.³

It is true that "original sin" is often used with all three of these concepts in mind. As "original sin" is used in this paper, however, a narrower concept is implied: "the phrase original sin designates only the hereditary moral corruption common to all men from birth."⁴

and H. C. Sheldon, *System of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1903) 316-17. John Wesley preached a sermon on original sin, evidently from Eph 2:3c on January 24, 1743 at Bath, England. This message showed he certainly believed that original sin was taught in this text. However, his doctrine of preventient grace probably caused him to deny that man was guilty or under wrath due to original sin. See John Wesley, *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley* (4 vols.; New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., n.d.), I, 413; and A. S. Wood, *The Burning Heart: John Wesley, Evangelist* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967) 232-36. Catholic: Both Augustine and Aquinas used Eph 2:3c to support original sin, though they had quite different understandings of man's sinfulness. See Saint Augustine, *Saint Augustine's Anti-Pelagian Works*, trans. by P. Holmes and R. E. Wallis; rev. by B. B. Warfield, *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (vol. 4; New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1887) 50, 122, 150, 236, 290-91. One wonders why G. M. Lukken translates Augustine's *natura* (Latin for nature = φύσις) as "second nature." See Lukken's *Original Sin in the Roman Liturgy* (Leiden: Brill, 1973) 330. For Aquinas, see *Original Sin* (*Summa Theologiae*, 26; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963) 11 (Question 81:1). For a modern Catholic perspective see A. M. Dubarle, *The Biblical Doctrine of Original Sin*, trans. by E. M. Stewart (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1964) 188-89 and Ferninand Prat, *The Theology of St. Paul*, trans. by J. C. Stoddard (Westminster, Md.: The Newman Bookshop, 1956), 2, 589.

² Among many denials, see Markus Barth, *Ephesians* (AB; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), I, 231; N. P. Williams, *The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., Ltd., 1927) 113, n. 1; and George B. Stevens, *The Pauline Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), 152-58.

³ Fred C. Kuehner, "Fall of Man" in the *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. by C. F. Pfeiffer, et al. (2 vols.; Chicago: Moody, 1975), I, 589.

⁴ A. A. Hodge, *Outlines of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972 reprint of 1879 edition) 324. It cannot be asserted too strongly that "original" does not refer to man's original character as created by God, but to his original character as a descendant of Adam.

The investigation, then, relates to the legitimacy of using Eph 2:3c as a proof text for the hereditary moral corruption of man's nature.

The term "nature" is used incessantly in articulating the doctrines of theology proper (specifically relating to the trinity), Christology (one person with two "natures"), anthropology (human "nature"), and hamartiology (sin "nature," old "nature"). However, there is often confusion in the way this term is used. In this writer's view, it is imperative to distinguish between a "person" as a substantive entity and a "nature" as a complex of attributes in any of these branches of theology.⁵ Therefore, the term "nature" will be used here to refer to a complex of attributes. Attributes are viewed as innate characteristics, not acquired habits.

Only an exegetical theology can be a valid biblical theology. Therefore, the paper is primarily exegetical. The three sections handle (1) preliminary matters of exegesis, (2) the Semitic nature of τέκνα . . . ὄργης, and (3) the crucial word φύσει. The conclusion summarizes the exegesis and briefly interacts with other views from the perspective that Eph 2:3c does indeed support the idea of hereditary moral corruption.

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

Context

A well-known approach to the book of Ephesians views its first three chapters as primarily doctrinal and its second three chapters as primarily expounding duties based upon doctrine. After his normal epistolary introduction (1:1-2), Paul breaks out into praise to the triune God for his glorious salvation (1:3-14). Next he explains his prayerful desire that the Ephesians might apprehend a greater knowledge of their glorious position in the body of Christ (1:15-23). The first three verses of chap. 2 serve to remind the Ephesians of their sinful past so that they might better appreciate the love, mercy, and grace of God who saved them by grace through faith for good works 2:4-10). The remainder of chaps. 2 and 3 further explains God's gracious program of uniting Jew and Gentile in Christ's body, the church (2:11-3:13). Chap. 3 ends, as did chap. 1, with a majestic prayer for the Ephesians' spiritual growth which concludes with a stirring doxology (3:14-21).

⁵See J. O. Buswell, Jr., *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 1. 55, 2. 56. R. E. Showers comes to the similar conclusion that nature refers to character or "inherent disposition." See his "The New Nature," (unpublished Th.D. dissertation, Grace Theological Seminary, 1975) 23.

Text

At first glance into the critical apparatus of the U.B.S. text,⁶ it appears that there are no textual variants in 2:3. The Nestle text's apparatus reveals that manuscripts A and D have the second person ήμεῖς instead of the first person ήμεῖς in the first clause of the verse.⁷ Tischendorf's more exhaustive apparatus shows that manuscripts A, D, E, F, G, K, L, and P have ήμεν instead of ήμεθα as the main verb in 2:3c.⁸ Since these two forms are parsed identically, no change in meaning is involved. A variant more important for exegesis changes the word order of the phrase from τέκνα φύσει ὄργης to φύσει τέκνα ὄργης (mss A, D, E, F, G, L, and P, and some versions).⁹ At first glance, this reading seems to place much more emphasis upon the crucial term φύσει. However, none of the above variants have sufficient support to render the text of the passage questionable. This study, therefore, will proceed with the text of Eph 2:3c as it stands in the Nestle, U.B.S., and Trinitarian Bible Society (*textus receptus*) texts.

Change in person

The attentive reader of Ephesians 1-2 will notice that Paul speaks in the first person plural¹⁰ and addresses the Ephesians in the second person.¹¹ The question arises as to why Paul shifts from first person to second person and then back again to first person (see 1:12-14; see also 2:1-3 for the opposite shift). Does his first person plural "we" refer to himself and the Ephesians or does it mean "we Jews," as opposed to "you (Ephesians) Gentiles"? In interpreting 2:3c ήμεθα

⁶Kurt Aland, et al., ed.; *The Greek New Testament* (3rd ed.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1975) 666-67.

⁷Nestle, Eberhard, ed., *Novum Testamentum Graece* (24th ed.; Stuttgart: Württembergischen Bibelanstalt, 1960) 491.

⁸Constantine Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Graece* (3 vols.; *editio octava critica major*; Lipsiae: Giesecke and Derrient, 1872), 2. 671. The *textus receptus* also has ήμεν instead of ήμεθα; see H KAINH ΔΙΑΘHKH (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1976) 355.

⁹Tischendorf, *NT Graece*, 2. 671. Another very obscure reading listed by Tischendorf is τέκνα ὄργης φύσει. For a rather full textual apparatus on this verse see S. D. F. Salmond, "The Epistle to the Ephesians" in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. by W. R. Nicoll (5 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974 reprint), 3. 285.

¹⁰Notice the first person plural pronouns in 1:2, 3 (2x), 4 (2x), 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 14, 17, 19; 2:3, 4, 5, 7, 14 and the first person plural verbs in 1:7, 11; 2:3 (2x), 9, 10, 14, 18. The question is whether these first person plural expressions ("we," "us") relate to Paul and the Ephesians or to Paul and other Jews, exclusive of the gentile Ephesians.

¹¹Notice also the second person pronouns in 1:2, 13 (2x), 15, 16, 17, 18; 2:2 (2x), 8, 11, 13, 17, 22; 3:1 and the second person verbs in 1:13; 2:2, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 19 (2x), 22. These expressions undoubtedly refer to the Ephesians collectively.

then refers either to Paul and his readers¹² or to Paul and other Jews.¹³ The final comparative clause, ώς καὶ οἱ λοιποί, refers either to the rest of the Gentiles,¹⁴ or to humanity in general, including Jews and Gentiles.¹⁵ The position taken here is that “we” is a reference to Paul and the Ephesians, and “the rest” is a reference to mankind in general. It is not until 2:11ff. that a discernible distinction can be made between “we” (Jews) and “you” (Gentiles).¹⁶

Word order

That the word order of 2:3c was considered difficult at one time or another is evident from the textual variants which change the order from τέκνα φύσει ὄργης to φύσει τέκνα ὄργης and τέκνα ὄργης φύσει. Robertson notes that this word order is unusual, but offers no explanation.¹⁷ Winer lists some other instances in Paul where the genitive is “separated from its governing noun by another word” and suggests that this word order was necessary so that “an unsuitable stress . . . was not to fall on φύσει.”¹⁸ Abbott finds the position of φύσει to be unemphatic and even uses this as an argument against interpreting it to support the doctrine of original sin.¹⁹ Alford agrees that there is no emphasis on φύσει but states that “its doctrinal

¹²For the view that “we” in 2:3c refers to Paul and his readers, Jews and Gentiles alike, see John Eadie, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* (reprinted; Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, 1977) 130-31; Charles J. Ellicott, *Critical and Grammatical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (reprinted; Minneapolis: James Family, 1978) 45; William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1967) 109-10; R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1961) 410; and S. D. F. Salmond, “Ephesians,” 285-86.

¹³For the view that “we” in 2:3c refers to Paul and other Jews, excluding the gentile Ephesians (ὑμᾶς, 2:1), see T. K. Abbott, *The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1897) 43; Francis Foulkes, *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians* (Tyndale New Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963) 70; Charles Hodge, *An Exposition of Ephesians* (Wilmington, DE: Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc., n.d.) 37; and H. A. W. Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Ephesians*, trans. by M. J. Evans (reprinted; Winona Lake, IN: Alpha Publications, 1979) 363.

¹⁴Abbott, *Ephesians*, 46; Foulkes, *Ephesians*, 70; and Meyer, *Ephesians*, 368.

¹⁵Eadie, *Ephesians*, 137; Ellicott, *Ephesians*, 46; and Lenski, *Ephesians*, 412.

¹⁶The writer agrees entirely with Hendriksen on this point. See his *Ephesians*, 109-10.

¹⁷A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 419, 503.

¹⁸G. B. Winer, *A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament*, rev. by G. Lünemann; trans. by J. H. Thayer (Andover: Warren H. Draper, 1886) 191.

¹⁹Abbott, *Ephesians*, p. 45 states that the original sin view “gives a very great emphasis to φύσει, which its position forbids.”

force . . . is not thereby lessened.”²⁰ Another differing opinion is offered by Nigel Turner:

I would say the position is very emphatic: the word comes as a hiatus in a genitive construct construction (Semitic), so that it must go closely with *tekna* and suggests a meaning, “natural children of wrath.”²¹

At this juncture, it seems that Abbott’s contention lacks proof. As Alford stated, even if φύσει is not emphatic, its doctrinal force is not negated. The meaning of φύσει is more crucial to its doctrinal import than its position in the sentence. However, Turner’s view deserves careful consideration, especially when it is noted that this is the only place in the NT where this type of construction is interrupted in this way.²²

Syntax of 2:1-3

Only three questions can be noted briefly here. The first concerns the logical and grammatical connection of 2:1 (καὶ ὑμᾶς . . .) with the preceding prayer of Paul. Westcott’s view that καὶ ὑμᾶς in 2:1 is “strictly parallel” to καὶ πάντα ὑπέταξεν and καὶ αὐτὸν ἔδωκεν in 1:22²³ seems untenable in view of the climactic nature of 1:22-23 in concluding Paul’s prayer. Rather, 2:1 is better viewed as a specific application to the Ephesians (The position of καὶ ὑμᾶς is emphatic.) of the power of God mentioned previously (1:19ff.).²⁴

A second consideration is the anacoluthon in 2:1. Paul’s exposition of sin in 2:2-3 breaks the sentence begun in 2:1. Evidently the main verb lacking in 2:1 (for which ὑμᾶς ὅντας νεκροὺς . . . was to be the direct object) is finally supplied by συνεζωοποίησεν. The adjective νεκροὺς, describing man’s problem in 2:1, is answered by the verb συνεζωοποίησεν in 2:5.

The third syntactical question relates to the connection of 2:3c to the preceding. In 2:3 the subject ήμεῖς has a compound predicate.

²⁰Henry Alford, *The Greek Testament*, rev. by E. F. Harrison (4 vols.; Chicago: Moody, 1958), 3. 91.

²¹Nigel Turner, personal letter to this writer, February 2, 1980.

²²The Semitic construct construction mentioned by Turner will be discussed in the next chapter. Table 2 lists every NT instance of this construction. Eph 2:3c is the only instance where another word interrupts between metaphorical *vōs* or *tēkna* and its following genitive.

²³B. F. Westcott, *St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians* (reprinted; Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, 1976) 29.

²⁴For this view see Abbott, *Ephesians*, 38-39; Ellicott, *Ephesians*, 42; and Meyer, *Ephesians*, 356. Perhaps the καὶ in 2:1 is to be understood as emphatic (“indeed”). See H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1955) 250-51.

The two main verbs, ἀνεστράφημέν and ἤμεθα, vividly portray first the acts and then the state of the Ephesians' past lives. Two ἐν plus relative pronoun phrases are the means of connecting both v 1 to v 2 and v 2 to v 3.²⁵

THE ALLEGED SEMITISM

General definition of Semitisms

The precise nature and literary identity of the language of the NT has long been a matter of scholarly debate. Gone are the days when the NT was viewed as "Holy Ghost Greek," written in a mystical language unrelated to the secular world.²⁶ It is commonly recognized today that the NT was written largely in *koiné* Greek, the language of the people, rather than in the polished literary style of classical Greek.²⁷ More controversial is the degree of influence exercised by

²⁵The writer would like to introduce the question of a chiastic arrangement in 2:1-3. This is merely a tentative suggestion, not a dogmatic conclusion. Note that vv. 1 and 3b both have verb forms which refer to a *state of being* (ὄντας, present participle of εἰμι and ἤμεθα, imperfect indicative of εἰμι). Also note that vv. 2 and 3a, both of which begin with prepositional phrases in ἐν, have verbs which present analogous concepts of *habitual behavior* (περιεπατήσατε and ἀνεστράφημέν, probably constative aorists). The possible ABBA chiasmus, diagrammed below, has as its first and fourth elements the idea of sin as a *state*, while its second and third elements view sin as *activity*. Let the reader analyze this and decide whether it is intentional or merely coincidental. Whether or not chiasmus is accepted, it is evident that *conceptually* 2:3b is similar to 2:1, and that 2:2 is similar to 2:3. For some insights and additional sources on chiasmus, see Nigel Turner, *Syntax (A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 3; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1963) 345-47; and J. H. Moulton, *Style (A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 4; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1976) 3, 65, 87, 97ff., 116, 147, 116, 147.

2:1 A : καὶ ὑμᾶς ὄντας νεκρούς

τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ὑμῶν,

2:2 B : ἐν αἷς ποτε περιεπατήσατε κατὰ τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἔξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος, τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος ἐν τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας.

2:3 B¹: ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἀπεστράφημέν ποτε ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν, ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν,

2:3b A¹: καὶ ἤμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὁργῆς ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί

²⁶See Adolf Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, trans. by A. Grieve (reprinted; Winona Lake, IN: Alpha, 1979) 64ff. Deissmann viewed the "Holy Ghost Greek" theory as a corollary of verbal inspiration. In deprecating one, he deprecated the other, as if the doctrine of verbal inspiration ruled out the personalities and culture of the human authors of Scripture. This indicates a need for conservatives to adequately articulate a Bibliology which avoids the pitfalls of both errantism and docetism.

²⁷This writer is aware that this statement is perhaps over-simplified. Obviously the style of the NT writers varies exceedingly; Luke and the author of Hebrews both used a rather polished style.

Semitic culture and language upon the NT writers. Related to this influence are the literary similarities and disparities between the NT and the LXX.²⁸ Deissmann directed much of his labors against an extreme theory of heavy dependence on the LXX and emphasized the living nature of language and the various circumstances present in the lives of the NT writers.²⁹ One must take care, however, to notice the Semitic background of the NT writers.³⁰

The terms Hebraism, Aramaism, and Semitism are all used to describe Semitic influence upon the vocabulary and style of NT Greek. As Moule states, "this ugly and rather jargonistic word seems to have 'come to stay' as a term to describe features of Greek which are tinged with either Aramaic or Hebrew."³¹ Moule's definition is perhaps over-simplified, since other works distinguish between "Semitisms" and "secondary Semitisms." A Semitism proper (or primary Semitism) is defined as "a deviation from genuine Greek idiom to a

²⁸For a concise discussion of Semitisms and a valuable bibliography on the subject, see C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek* (London: Cambridge University, 1959) 171-91. For a more current discussion and bibliography see Weston Fields, "Aramaic New Testament Originals?" (unpublished Postgraduate Seminar paper, Grace Theological Seminary, 1975). H. St. John Thackeray discusses the nature of LXX Greek from the perspectives of its κοινή basis and its Semitic element. See his *Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge: University Press, 1909) 16-55.

²⁹Deissmann stated "The theory indicated is a great power in exegesis, and that is not to be denied. It is edifying and what is more, it is convenient. But it is absurd. It mechanises the marvellous variety of the linguistic elements of the Greek Bible and cannot be established either by the psychology of language or by history." See his *Bible Studies*, 65. In Deissmann's view the key to understanding NT Greek was not found in the "translation Greek" of the LXX but in the inscriptions and papyri of the NT period (80-84).

³⁰While respecting the work of Deissmann and J. H. Moulton in relating NT Greek to secular Greek, C. F. D. Moule cautions that "the pendulum has swung rather too far in the direction of equating Biblical with 'secular' Greek; and we must not allow these fascinating discoveries to blind us to the fact that Biblical Greek still does retain certain peculiarities, due in part to Semitic influence . . . , and in part to the moulding influence of the Christian experience, which did in some measure create an idiom and a vocabulary of its own." See his *Idiom-Book*, 3-4; cf. 188. Similarly Nigel Turner speaks of the "strongly Semitic character of Bibl. Greek." Turner views the language of the NT to be as unique as its subject matter. See his *Syntax*, 9.

³¹Moule, *Idiom-Book*, 171. For additional discussions of Semitisms see F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and rev. by R. W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1961) 3-4; James H. Moulton, *Prolegomena (A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 1; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1908) 1-20; J. H. Moulton and W. F. Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation (A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, 2; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1920) 412-85; A. T. Robertson, *Grammar*, 24-29, 88-108; and G. B. Winer, *Grammar*, 238.

too literal rendering of the language of a Semitic original.³² In this sense, Eph 2:3c is not a Semitism (primary). A secondary Semitism, however is a possible but unidiomatic Greek construction, which strains ordinary Greek usage to conform to a normal Semitic construction.³³ It is only in this secondary sense that the term Semitism relates to Eph 2:3c.

A specific Semitism: τέκνα ὄργης

Hebrew syntaxes and lexicons often note the use of בֵּן in the construct state followed by a noun expressing quality, character, or other attributes.³⁴ According to Gesenius, this construction is used “to represent a person . . . as possessing some object or quality, or being in some condition.”³⁵ While normal Greek or English idiom would simply supply an adjective, Davidson states,

The genius of the [Hebrew] language is not favourable to the formation of adjectives, and the gen. is used in various ways as explicative of the preceding noun, indicating its material, qualities, or relations.³⁶

Certain other Hebrew words are used comparatively, often with this type of “qualifying genitive:” אִישׁ, בָּעֵל, and בְּתַת. Two good examples of בֵּן in this construction are בֵּן הַפּוֹת (Deut 25:2, a “son of stripes” = “deserves beating”) and בָּנִי-חַיל (2 Kgs 2:16, “sons of strength” = “strong men”). For further examples, see Table 1.

³²Moulton and Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation*, 14, 477. This definition assumes Hebrew or Aramaic NT source documents or perhaps even originals. This theory has been evaluated in Fields’ work cited in n. 28.

³³Moulton and Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation*, 477. Nigel Turner’s definition is similar. He describes Semitisms as “those Greek idioms which owe their form or the frequency of their occurrence to Aramaic, or Hebrew, or to an influence which might equally well apply to both languages.” See his *Style*, 5.

³⁴See A. B. Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1901) 30-33; W. R. Harper, *Elements of Hebrew Syntax* (5th ed.; New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899) 30-31; S. P. Tregelles, *Gesenius’ Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949) 126, sec (7); Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill/Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), 1, 133; and Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1906) 121, § 8; H. Haag, “בֵּן” *TDOT*, 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 152-53. For this in the LXX see Thackeray, *Grammar*, 41-42.

³⁵W. Gesenius and E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar* (2nd English ed.; ed. by A. E. Cowley; Oxford: Clarendon, 1910) 417. Examples of the construction are given on 418.

³⁶Davidson, *Syntax*, 32.

Many Greek grammars and lexicons note that υἱος and τέκνον are sometimes used in a manner equivalent to this Hebrew construction. It is described in various sources as the “Hebraic genitive,”³⁷ the “genitive of relationship,”³⁸ the “attributive genitive,”³⁹ the “adjectival genitive,”⁴⁰ the “genitive of quality,”⁴¹ and the “genitive of a thing.”⁴² All of these terms describe the same grammatical feature: instead of modifying a noun with a simple adjective, the word υἱος or τέκνον is followed by a noun in the genitive which modifies the noun. For example, instead of describing a person as “peaceful” (εἰρηνικός), he is described as a “son of peace” (υἱος εἰρήνης, Luke 10:6). For further NT examples, see Table 2.⁴³

Although an impressive array of scholars view Eph 2:3c as a Semitism,⁴⁴ some deny or diminish the Semitic influence. Adolf Deissmann in his *Bible Studies* made a case for υἱος or τέκνον followed by the genitive as a genuine Greek idiom. Distinguishing such expressions in the gospels (which he regarded as translation Greek) from those in the Pauline and Petrine epistles, he concluded concerning the latter:

In no case whatever are they un-Greek; they might quite well have been coined by a Greek who wished to use impressive language. Since, however, similar turns of expression are found in the Greek Bible [LXX], and are in part cited by Paul and others, the theory of analogical formations will be found a sufficient explanation.⁴⁵

³⁷ Moulton and Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation*, 440. M. Zerwick similarly refers to the “Hebrew genitive.” See his *Biblical Greek* (English ed.; Rome: Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1963) 14.

³⁸ Blass-Debrunner-Funk, *Grammar*, 89.

³⁹ Robertson, *Grammar*, 496-97.

⁴⁰ Moule, *Idiom-Book*, 174-75.

⁴¹ Turner, *Style*, 90.

⁴² J. H. Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1901) 635; and W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. by F. W. Gingrich and F. W. Danker (2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1979) 834.

⁴³ Table 2 has been adapted from a list in Moulton and Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation*, 441.

⁴⁴ To mention only a few scholars, see Arndt and Gingrich, *Lexicon*, 839; Alexander Buttman, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek*, trans. by J. H. Thayer (Andover: Warren F. Draper, 1880) 161-62; C. F. D. Moule, *Idiom-Book*, 174; Moulton and Howard, *Accidence and Word Formation*, 441; Albracht Oepke, “παῖς . . . ,” *TDNT*, 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967) 639; Thayer, *Lexicon*, 618; and Winer, *Grammar*, 238. Nearly all critical commentaries also view τέκνα . . . δρῦνς as a Semitism.

⁴⁵ Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 166. Evidently “analogical formation” meant that NT writers used a Greek idiom analogous to the Hebrew idiom.

Deissmann's argumentation was twofold. First, he supplied inscriptive evidence of similar pure Greek idiom.⁴⁶ Second, he pointed out that even the translators of the LXX did not slavishly translate metaphorical יִלְבַּשׁ with *vīoç*.⁴⁷ While Moulton and Milligan followed Deissmann,⁴⁸ this writer must agree with the majority of scholars, who view Eph 2:3c as a genuine Semitism. Nigel Turner's statement seems adequate: "The LXX translators so often faced the problem of the construct state in its adjectival function . . . that apparently the habit of using a genitive of quality had been caught by Paul. . . ."⁴⁹

Three lingering questions

While most scholars view *tékva* in 2:3c as synonymous with *vīoì*, there are a few dissenters. In 2:2 Paul used the Semitic *toïç vīoïç tñç ḥ̄p̄t̄θ̄eiaç*. Why then in the next verse did he switch from *vīoç* to *tékva*? Was this unconscious, or for literary variety, or was it a subtle emphasis of a birth concept (*tékvov* from *tíktw*, "to beget")?⁵⁰ It is interesting to note that there seem to be comparatively few instances in the LXX where *tékvov* translates metaphorical יִלְבַּשׁ.⁵¹ As seen in Table 1, *vīoç* is the predominant word. However, as shown in Table 2, there are six NT instances where *tékvov* seems to be used in the Semitic metaphorical sense. Only further study will show whether this change from *vīoç* to *tékvov* is exegetically significant. Presently, however, such significance seems doubtful.

⁴⁶Ibid., 165-66.

⁴⁷Ibid., 164.

⁴⁸J. H. Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976 reprint) 649.

⁴⁹Turner, *Style*, 649. It is interesting to note that scholars before Deissmann (when NT Greek was explained as either Semitic or derived from classical) and after Deissmann (when NT Greek is viewed in its *koiné* context) are agreed that Eph 2:3c is a Semitism.

⁵⁰C. F. Ellicott, citing Bengel as in agreement, states that *tékva* "is not simply identical with the Hebraistic *vīoì*, ver. 2 . . ." He believes that the word connoted "a near and close relation" to God's wrath. See his *Ephesians*, 46 and Alford, "Ephesians," 3. 91. M. R. Vincent views *tékva* as emphasizing the connection to wrath by birth. See his "The Epistles of Paul" (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, 3; reprinted; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 375. The great American theologian Jonathan Edwards also noted the change from *vīoç* to *tékvov* and saw in it an emphasis on birth. See his *Original Sin (The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, 3; New Haven/London: Yale University, 1970) 301. In opposition to this view see J. Armitage Robinson, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (2nd ed.; London: James Clarke and Co., n.d.) 51.

⁵¹This writer has not done the concordance work necessary for dogmatism on this point. However, thus far he has found *tékvov* for metaphorical יִלְבַּשׁ only in Hos 2:4; 10:9. Isa 57:4 has *tékva ḥ̄p̄t̄θ̄eiaç* for עֲשֵׂה־יְלֻלָּה.

In the introductory section on word order, the writer has already presented several opinions on the sequence of words in this phrase. At this point the question of word order must be directed to the question of Semitic influence. Of all the OT examples of metaphorical נָסַע and the NT examples of metaphorical νίος/τέκνον, only in 2:3c does a word intervene between the term “son” and the qualifying genitive. This fact seems to make φύσει quite emphatic. Is this unique word order relevant to the question of Semitism? Perhaps this indicates that 2:3c is more emphatic than a normal Semitic construction.⁵² construction.⁵²

While the nature of the genitive—whether subjective or objective—is not broached in many sources, it is an important question.⁵³ The ambiguity of such constructions is evident from the NIV’s translation (“those who are anointed:” objective) and margin (“two who bring oil:” subjective) of Zech 4:14. In Eph 2:2 τοῖς νίοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας must be subjective. However, 2:3c is normally taken as objective: τέκνα . . . ὄργης means those who are presently under God’s wrath (cf. John 3:18, 36; Rom 1:18; 9:22) or those who are worthy of God’s wrath (Eph 5:6; Col 3:6). It is grammatically possible that τέκνα . . . ὄργης should be understood as those characterized by wrath in the same sense that the τοῖς νίοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας are characterized by disobedience. In other words, is this wrath another aspect of man’s rebellion against God? Is it his own wrath against others? While this interpretation does not commend itself to this writer, it deserves further consideration.⁵⁴

THE CRUCIAL WORD: φύσει

In many ways, the doctrinal import of this passage depends upon the sense of this word. The preceding discussion of the Semitic background of the phrase ἡμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὄργης does not really assert or deny that *peccatum originale* is taught in Eph 2:3c. While the Semitic idiom certainly does not specify *why* men are under God’s wrath or *when* they come under it. These two questions must be answered from the exegesis of φύσει. If φύσει refers to innate character, then the sense of hereditary moral corruption is supported. If φύσει legitimately can be viewed as an acquired characteristic (“second nature”), then this verse should not be used to support the

⁵²Buttmann (*Grammar*, 387) views this as hyperbaton, an inverted construction used for emphasis and perspicuity. Arndt and Gingrich (*Lexicon*, 877) cite an instance in Plutarch with φύσει in this position.

⁵³In each case it must be asked whether the noun modified by the genitive is its subject or object. See Turner, *Style*, 90.

⁵⁴Ellicott, *Ephesians*, 171 and Alford, “*Ephesians*,” 3. 91 react against the subjective sense.

doctrine. This section of the paper will survey the etymology of φύσις and its use in both the extra-biblical and biblical literature.⁵⁵ Then the meaning of the word in Eph 2:3c will be discussed.

Etymology

The noun φύσις seems to be a “verbal abstract”⁵⁶ derived from φύομαι or φύω, meaning “bring forth, produce, put forth” (transitive) or “grow, wax, spring up or forth (intransitive).⁵⁷ It is often used of the natural growth of the *physical* creation, especially of plant life. Thus, the noun φύσις is related to the external form of plant life as a state of its growth. It came also to be applied to the natural state of humanity resulting from birth.⁵⁸

Extra-biblical use

In addition to its botanical and anthropological senses, φύσις “became a key concept among the Pre-Socratic philosophers in considering the nature of the world, and similarly the Sophists in the question of the foundation and basis of law.”⁵⁹ In Stoic philosophy, φύσις became a god of the universe, with whom man must live harmoniously.⁶⁰ The following outline summarizes the diverse usages of the word.⁶¹

- I. Origin (of persons and plants)
 - A. origin or birth
 - B. growth

⁵⁵Due to lack of space, this survey must necessarily be quite brief. For more detailed information see G. Harder, “Nature,” (*NIDNTT*, 2; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 2, 656-62; H. Köster, “φύσις . . .,” *TDNT*, 9 (1974) 251-77; and H. G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. and aug. by H. S. Jones (9th ed.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), 1964-65.

⁵⁶Köster, “φύσις . . .,” *TDNT*, 9. 252. It is attested as early as Homer (eighth century B.C.). See Harder, “Nature,” 656.

⁵⁷Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon*, 1966.

⁵⁸Köster, “φύσις . . .,” *TDNT*, 9. 252. Other related words are the adjective φυσικός (“natural, inborn, native”), the nouns φυσίωμα and φυσίωσις (“natural tendency, character”), and the verbs φυσιώ (“to dispose oneself naturally”), φυσιολογέω (“to discourse upon nature or natural causes”), and φυσιοποιέω (“to remould as by a second nature”).

⁵⁹Harder, “Nature,” *NIDNTT*, 2. 656.

⁶⁰Ibid., 2. 657-58. The citation of Marcus Aurelius’ words ὃ φύσις, ἐκ σοῦ πάντα, ἐν σοῖ πάντα, εἰς σε πάντα (cf. Rom 11:36) may provide a vivid illustration of ἔλατρευσαν τῇ κτίσει παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα (Rom 1:25).

⁶¹Adapted from Liddell and Scott, *Lexicon* 1964-65.

- II. Natural form or constitution resulting from growth (persons or things)
 - A. nature, constitution
 - B. outward form, appearance
 - C. constitution
 - D. mental character or nature or instinct (animals)
- III. Regular order of nature (men, plants, the world in general)
- IV. Philosophical
 - A. originating power of the universe
 - B. elementary substance of the universe
 - C. concretely for the universe
- V. Concrete term for men, animals or plants collectively
- VI. Kind, sort, or species (of plants)
- VII. Sex (organs or characteristics)

"There is no Hebrew equivalent in the Old Testament for *physis*,"⁶² due to the creator/creature distinction in OT revelation. God is the ultimate reference point instead of φύσις. Thus φύσις does not occur in the LXX canonical writings, but only in the apocryphal books of Wisdom and 3 and 4 Maccabees. In these books, usage generally parallels Greek literature. Probably the most significant occurrence is Wis 13:1: μάταιοι μὲν γάρ πάντες ἀνθρώποι φύσει. Does φύσει here mean "birth" (cf. NEB "born fools")⁶³ or "nature" (created nature)? If innate created nature is in view, this concept is in contrast to Paul's explanation (Rom 1:19ff.) of the perspicuity of natural revelation.⁶⁴ The Jewish writer Philo modified φύσις in his unsuccessful attempt to harmonize the OT and Greek philosophy.⁶⁵ Josephus similarly adapted φύσις, using it often to describe the natural topography of the land, human character, and nature as a whole.⁶⁶

⁶² Harder, "Nature," *NIDNTT*, 2. 658.

⁶³ *The New English Bible with Apocrypha: Oxford Study Edition* (New York: Oxford University, 1976) 107.

⁶⁴ Köster, "φύσις . . .," *TDNT*, 9. 267.

⁶⁵ Φύσις is extremely common in Philo, who viewed it as divine power and agency. See Köster, "φύσις . . .," *TDNT*, 9. 267-69 and Harder, "Nature," *NIDNTT*, 2. 658-59.

⁶⁶ See Köster, "φύσις . . .," *TDNT* 9. 279-81; Harder, "Nature," *NIDNTT*, 2. 659-60. One passage from Josephus has been urged in proof that φύσις need not always refer to innate character but also may refer to acquired characteristics or habits. Thus φύσις in Eph 2:3c need not refer to sin as in inherited or innate trait but instead to an acquired sinfulness. The passage is found in the *Antiquities*, 3:8:1. In it he describes the Pharisees' philosophy of punishment in the words of ὅλλως τε καὶ φύσει πρὸς τὰς λιαν ἐχαλέπηνε which is translated "any way they are naturally lenient in the matter of punishments." Eadie describes this as "constitutional clemency" (*Ephesians*, 135). While it appears that this use may include habitual practice, it is practice which

New Testament use

Φύσις occurs 14 times in the NT (12 of these are in Paul). Three related words also occur: (1) the adjective φυσικός (three times); (2) the adverb φυσικῶς (once); and (3) the verb φύω (three times). All of these occurrences are listed in Table 3. According to Köster, the relative rarity of φύσις in the NT (as compared with its frequency in extra-biblical literature) is noteworthy.⁶⁷ Abbott-Smith's summary of its occurrences is accurate and concise:

- (1) nature (natural powers or constitution) of a person or a thing:
Jas 3:7; 2 Pet 1:4; Eph 2:3
- (2) origin or birth: Rom 2:27; Gal 2:15
- (3) nature, i.e., the regular order or law of nature: 1 Cor 11:14;
Rom 1:26; 2:14; 11:21, 24; Gal 4:8⁶⁸

Scholars are agreed that the concept of natural, innate character is present in all but three of these passages: Rom 2:14, 1 Cor 11:14, and Eph 2:3c. Rom 2:14 and 1 Cor 11:14 will be briefly discussed before a more extensive treatment of Eph 2:3c.

Φύσις in Rom 2:14. While this may not be “the most important and also the most difficult passage in which Paul uses φύσις,”⁶⁹ it is certainly not an easy text, as the discouraging comments of Sanday and Headlam show.⁷⁰ The hermeneutical problem here is to determine in what sense, if any, do Gentiles (εθνη is anarthrous) by nature

emanates from natural characteristics. For the original Greek and the English translation see Flavius Josephus, *Josephus (Jewish Antiquities, Books 12-14, The Loeb Classical Library*, 7 [London: Wm. Heinemann, 1943]) 374-75 (13:294).

⁶⁷ Köster (“φύσις . . . ,” *TDNT*, 9. 271) finds the absence of φύσις from such passages as Acts 17 and Romans 1:18-25 as an indicator that Paul would say “nein” to natural theology!

⁶⁸ G. Abbott Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (3rd ed.; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1937) 476. The analysis of W. E. Vine is identical. See his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1966 reprint) 103. Arndt and Gingrich's classification (*Lexicon*, 869-70) differs slightly: (1) natural endowment or condition, inherited from one's ancestors:” Gal 2:15; Rom 2:27; Eph 2:3; Rom 11:21, 24; (2) “natural characteristics or disposition:” Jas 3:7b; 2 Pet 1:4; Gal 4:8; (3) “nature as the regular natural order:” Rom 1:26; 2:14; 1 Cor 11:14; and (4) “natural being, product of nature, creature:” Jas 3:7a. It is difficult to distinguish between the first and second categories. Other possibilities for φύσις are simply “physically” in Rom 2:27 and “species” in both instances in Jas 3:7 (cf. NASB, NIV, and Harder, “Nature,” *NIDNTT*, 660-61).

⁶⁹ Köster, “φύσις . . . ,” *TDNT*, 9. 273.

⁷⁰ The impression received when one reads their note on this verse is that rationalists have taken it more literally than orthodox theologians. See William Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1902) 59-60. The treatment given this verse

fulfill the law's demands? The clause in question reads ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ νόμον ἔχοντα φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν, . . . While orthodox scholars have proposed some plausible solutions to the problem, most of them assume a questionable point. That is, most of them take φύσει with the following clause, making it modify ποιῶσιν. This writer tends to agree with Cranfield in taking φύσει with what precedes, modifying ἔχοντα. Thus, the difficulties of either toning down φύσει (viewing it as an acquired "second nature") or implying Pelagianism are eliminated. Instead, the passage is interpreted as describing regenerate Gentiles who practice the law, though by their birth and natural circumstances they do not possess the law. This allows φύσις to retain its normal meaning. This passage cannot be legitimately used to deny that φύσις refers to innate character in Eph 2:3c.⁷¹

Φύσις in 1 Cor 11:14. Paul's teaching on hair length is reinforced in 11:14-16 with two arguments. Paul first states that "nature" confirms his teaching (11:14) and then adds that this is the custom (*συνήθεια*) of all the churches. While some expositors may tend to blur the distinction between φύσις and συνήθεια, making φύσις equivalent to acquired habit or style, such exegesis is untenable in light of Pauline usage. Paul in Rom 1:26-27 stated that homosexuality was παρὰ φύσιν, obviously referring to mankind's innate sexual orientation resulting from his being created by God.⁷² Therefore, it would seem that Paul in 1 Corinthians again appeals to the God-given natural order for men and women. The innate sexual orientation of men and women is the basis of Paul's position on hair length. Again, this passage provides no evidence for those who wish to make φύσις in Eph 2:3c an acquired "second nature."

Use in Ephesians 2:3c

In this writer's view, φύσις in this passage retains its normal meaning of innate or natural character. While this passage alone

by C. E. B. Cranfield is a decided improvement. See his *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1975), I. 155-57.

⁷¹ Francis Foulkes does just this with this passage. See his *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963) 71. Cf. Cranfield's stimulating discussion in *Romans*, I. 156, 157 with footnotes. Hodge (*Romans*, 55) takes φύσει with ποιεῖν but distinguishes between merely Turner, outwardly *doing* the law and actually spiritually *fulfilling* the law. This view is also possible.

⁷²This refutes the current claim that homosexuality is the "natural" orientation for some people.

certainly would not sustain the developed Christian doctrine of original sin, it does make a contribution. While the word φύσις is neutral and in itself has no sinful connotation, this can be supplied from context. There is no contextual connection with Adam's first sin, nor is there any explicit proof of Traducianism. However, this passage does seem to have its place in asserting the hereditary moral corruption of the human race, which corruption results from Adam's first sin and is passed along by natural generation. In addition to the lexical support for this view, many scholarly commentaries have also advocated it.⁷³

The form of φύσις in this verse is dative. What is its precise significance? The answer to this question is admittedly subjective and interpretive, for the dative case is used to express a wide range of nuance. From most of the English translations, the idea of instrumentality surfaces ("by nature").⁷⁴ Turner and Winer, however, favor the dative of respect idea, which seems milder than instrumentality. Instead of being under wrath "by nature," it is thus "with respect to nature."⁷⁵ A third option is supported by Green who views φύσει as

⁷³ Karl Braune, "Ephesians," *Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 76-77; John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965) 141-42. Calvin says that "by nature" means "from their very origin, and from their mother's womb. In further comments he critiques Pelagianism and makes an important distinction between two ways the word nature is used: (1) man's original nature created by God, and (2) man's fallen nature corrupted by Adam's sin. John Eadie, *Ephesians*, 133-40. Eadie's extended treatment of 2:3c is one of the best this writer has found. He cites evidence from classical and Jewish Greek writings and interacts with sources who hold opposing views. He concludes thus: "The *modus* may be and is among 'the deep things of God,' but the *res* is palpable; for experience confirms the divine testimony that we are by nature 'children of wrath,' *per generationem*, not *per imitationem*." Charles Hodge, *Ephesians*, 38-39. In his fairly full treatment Hodge briefly deals with the Semitic background, the use of φύσις, and other views. Hodge cautiously states "this doctrine [hereditary depravity] may be fairly implied in the text but it is not asserted" (38). Lenski, *Ephesians*, 412-13. While viewing φύσις as innate here, Lenski concedes that φύσις may sometimes mean a "habitually and gradually developed . . . 'second nature.'" This writer is not convinced that such a concession is necessary. It seems that even when φύσις refers to development or growth it does so in the context of an outward development of an inner nature. Salmond, "Ephesians," 286-87. He also makes the questionable concession that φύσις can mean habit, but his treatment is very helpful, especially the section refuting Meyer's view, which will be explained later. E. K. Simpson and F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians* (*New International Commentary on the New Testament*; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 46-50. In a stirring manner Simpson defends this view by citing classical authors and interacting with J. A. Robinson, whose views will be explained later.

⁷⁴ Robertson, *Grammar*, 530, speaks of this as "instrumental of manner."

⁷⁵ Nigel Turner, personal letter; Winer, *Grammar*, 215.

dative of sphere.⁷⁶ While the instrumental idea seems most acceptable, in reality there is little difference between the three possibilities.

The view of φύσις favored above has not gone unchallenged. Several other views have been suggested and are briefly summarized here.⁷⁷ First, it is asserted by some that φύσει is the equivalent of an adverb such as ὄντως, ἀλήθως, or γνησίως. Thus Paul only says that "we were truly or genuinely children of wrath." The problem with this view is that, while φύσις may imply this sense, it means much more.⁷⁸ A second view takes the whole expression (τέκνα φύσει ὁργῆς) as a subjective genitive. In this view ὁργῆς is human wrath which characterizes the individuals described. This view is grammatically possible but exegetically and contextually doubtful. A third view is that φύσει simply means "in or by ourselves," apart from God's grace.⁷⁹ While φύσει certainly includes this idea, it means much more. Further, this view is vague and does not really answer the question of whether φύσει refers to original or actual sin.⁸⁰ A fourth view, that φύσις refers to developed or habitual behavior,⁸¹ (a "second-nature") cannot be sustained from the NT and extra-biblical usage of the word.

CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that Eph 2:3c is relevant to the doctrine of original sin. The Semitic phrase τέκνα . . . ὁργῆς places the unsaved individual as a worthy object of the wrath of God. Perhaps even more is implied by this phrase. The word φύσει presents the reason or cause for this most perilous of all positions. While it is true that God's wrath is upon all men for their actual sins,

⁷⁶Samuel G. Green, *Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1912) 228. He defines sphere in a logical sense as "that in which a quality inheres."

⁷⁷For more detailed interaction see the works of Alford, Eadie, Hodge, Simpson, and Salmond cited previously. These works cite sources holding the opposing views listed here.

⁷⁸Only one source consulted by this writer said that this was a legitimate meaning of φύσις, but the source viewed φύσις as having this meaning only in Gal 4:8. See Markus Barth, *Ephesians*, 1. 231. Even Meyer, who would not agree with the original sin view, denies the validity of this view. See his *Ephesians*, 368.

⁷⁹For advocates of this view see F. W. Beare and T. O. Wedel, "The Epistle to the Ephesians" (*The Interpreter's Bible*; 10; Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953) 641; C. F. D. Moule, *Idiom-Book*, 174 ("perhaps"); J. A. Robinson, *Ephesians*, 50; and N. P. Williams, *The Ideas of the Fall and Original Sin*, 113 n. 1.

⁸⁰As Meyer points out (*Ephesians*, 367), in this view "nothing is explained."

⁸¹For advocates of this view see Foulkes, *Ephesians*, 71; Thayer, *Lexicon*, 660 sec. c; and the Arminian theologians John Miley, *Systematic Theology*, 1. 512; and H. C. Sheldon, *System of Christian Doctrine*, 316-17.

Paul's use of φόστις here indicates a more basic problem. Men's evil deeds are done in a state of spiritual and moral separation from God (2:1). Man is in this state of spiritual death due to his sinful nature—his hereditary moral corruption. And it is this innate condition which ultimately brings the wrath of God upon him. Men are “natural children of wrath.”⁸²

Opposition to this view

Diverse arguments have been offered by the opponents of this view. Some of the arguments are exegetical and deserve an answer. While this could not be done in detail in this study, Appendix I has begun the task. Other arguments are more “logical” in nature but actually seem to place reason over revelation, as in the extreme case of those who would dismiss original sin as an immoral monstrosity on *a priori* grounds.⁸³ The answer to this objection must emphasize that man's present natural state is in a sense also unnatural.⁸⁴ His sinfulness, though included in God's plan, is viewed by God as man's own fault. God cannot be blamed for original sin for he did not create man sinful, but holy. All this aside, however, the final answer is “who are you, O man, to talk back to God?” (Rom 9:20, NIV).

While some would admit to a doctrine of original sin, they would deny that men are accounted guilty for this reason. Shedd summarizes the situation quite well:

The semi-Pelagian, Papal, and Arminian anthropologies differ from the Augustinian and reformed, by denying that corruption of nature is guilt. It is a physical and moral disorder leading to sin, but is not sin itself.⁸⁵

⁸²“Natural children of wrath” is the translation suggested by Nigel Turner in his letter to this writer.

⁸³For example see Charles G. Finney, *Systematic Theology* (Whittier, CA: Colporter Kemp, 1946 reprint) 244. Finney said that Eph 2:3c “cannot, consistently with natural justice, be understood to mean, that we are exposed to the wrath of God on account of our nature. It is a monstrous and blasphemous doctrine. . . .” On a more modern note, C. H. Dodd spoke of the “figment of an inherited guilt.” He asked, “how could anything so individual as guilty responsibility be inherited?” In the same context he also speaks of the “monstrous development of the doctrine of total depravity.” See his *The Meaning of Paul for Today* (New York: The New American Library, 1974) 61.

⁸⁴See Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, 2. 219: “As opposed to what is natural in the sense of created by God, man's inability is moral, not natural; but as opposed to what is moral in the sense of acquired by habit, man's inability is natural. When “natural means innate, we assert that inability is “natural.” When natural means “created” we assert that inability is “moral,” that is, “voluntary.” See also Calvin, *Ephesians*, 141-42.

⁸⁵Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, 2. 198. Even in reformed circles, however, some theologians have attempted to dilute the idea that corruption of nature is guilt. See Nathaniel W. Taylor, *Concio ad Clerum: A Sermon Delivered in the Chapel of Yale*

The Romanist perspective alleviates the guilt of original sin with its understanding of *limbus infantum* and infant baptism.⁸⁶ The Arminian position as articulated by Miley is “native depravity without native demerit.”⁸⁷ This position is exegetically and logically untenable. It does not handle φύσις properly. Neither does it make sense, for the innate disposition to sin, which leads to sin, is not viewed as sinful or guilty. How can the effect be worthy of wrath and the cause be innocent?⁸⁸

Implications for Christian living

The study of Scripture (What does it mean?) is incomplete unless the student asks, “What does it mean *to me?*” In the context of Eph 2:1-10 the answer is not hard to find. The believer is God’s workmanship, created for good works. When one contemplates his sinfulness in all its degradation, and when he realizes he deserves only the wrath of God, he then begins to appreciate the glorious gospel of God’s grace and realizes a true incentive for a holy lifestyle. C. H. Spurgeon said

A spiritual experience which is thoroughly flavored with a deep and bitter sense of sin is of great value to him that hath had it. It is terrible in the drinking, but it is most wholesome in the bowels, and in the whole of the after-life. Possibly, much of the flimsy piety of the present day arises from the ease with which men attain to peace and joy in these evangelistic days. . . . Too many think lightly of sin, and therefore think lightly of the Saviour. He who has stood before his God,

College, September 10, 1828 (New Haven: A. H. Moltby and Homan Hallock, 1842) 1-43. Taylor represented “New School” Presbyterianism.

⁸⁶See S. Harent, “Original Sin” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 11; New York: Robert Appleton Co., 1911), 2, 314; and P. J. Toner, “Limbo,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 9, 256. To a lesser degree one wonders whether the Lutheran and Anglican views of baptismal regeneration for infants have also tended to minimize the guilt of original sin.

⁸⁷Miley, *Systematic Theology*, 1, 521ff. This is also the basic position advocated by Meyer, *Ephesians*, 367. Meyer believes in a sinful natural constitution which eventually awakens and vanquishes man’s “moral will,” thereby incurring guilt and wrath. He bases this on his view that Romans 7 describes the experience of the natural man. Overall, the Arminian doctrine of universal preventient (preliminary) grace has probably tended to obscure the guiltiness of man by nature. This seems to be the position of John Wesley. See the analysis of his views on original sin in Mildred B. Wynkoop, *A Theology of Love: The Dynamic of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 1972), 150-55.

⁸⁸See Calvin, *Ephesians*, 141-42; Eadie, *Ephesians*, 136; and Salmond, “Ephesians,” 287. Salmond correctly observes that this “is to make a nature which originates sinful acts and which does that in the case of all men without exception, itself a neutral thing.” Cf. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology*, 2, 199-202.

convicted and condemned, with the rope about his neck, is the man to weep for joy when he is pardoned, to hate the evil which has been forgiven him, and to live to the honour of the Redeemer by whose blood he has been cleansed.⁸⁹

TABLE I
SOME OCCURRENCES OF **בָּן** IN THE CONSTRUCT STATE
USED METAPHORICALLY*

| <i>Text</i> | <i>NASB</i> | <i>NIV</i> |
|-------------|--|---|
| Num 17:10 | rebels or sons of rebellion | the rebellious |
| Num 24:17 | sons of Sheth or tumult | sons of Sheth or the noisy boasters |
| Deut 25:2 | deserves to be beaten or a son of beating | deserves to be beaten (LXX ἄξιος πληγῶν) |
| Judg 18:2 | valiant men or sons of valor | warriors |
| Judg 19:22 | worthless fellows or sons of Belial | wicked men |
| Judg 21:10 | valiant warriors | fighting men |
| 1 Sam 14:52 | valiant man | brave man |
| 1 Sam 26:16 | must surely die or are surely sons of death | deserve to die |
| 2 Sam 2:7 | valiant or sons of valor | brave |
| 2 Sam 7:10 | the wicked or sons of wickedness | wicked people |
| 2 Sam 12:5 | deserves to die or is a son of death | deserves to die |
| 1 Kgs 1:52 | a worthy man | a worthy man |
| 2 Kgs 2:3 | sons of the prophets | company of the prophets |
| 2 Kgs 2:16 | strong men | able men |
| 2 Kgs 14:14 | hostages | hostages |
| 1 Chr 17:9 | the wicked or sons of wickedness | wicked people |
| Neh 12:28 | sons of the singers | the singers |
| Ps 79:11 | those who are doomed to die or children of death | those condemned |
| Ps 89:22 | sons of wickedness or wicked man | wicked man |
| Isa 57:3 | sons of a sorceress | sons of a sorceress |
| Dan 11:14 | violent ones | violent men |
| Hos 10:9 | the sons of iniquity | the evildoers (LXX τὰ τέκνα ἀδικίος) |
| Zech 4:14 | anointed ones or sons of fresh oil | two who are anointed or two who bring oil |

* This chart is representative—not exhaustive. It was compiled from examples given in the lexicons and from a similar list compiled by Prof. Donald

⁸⁹C. H. Spurgeon, *The Early Years* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1962) 54.

Fowler. In each case except Deut 25:2 and Hos 10:9 the LXX renders the construction with *υἱος* plus the genitive. Notice the varying degrees of literality or dynamic equivalence used in translating the Hebrew *לֶבֶן* constructions.

TABLE 2

NT USES OF *υἱος* AND *τέκνον* WITH GENITIVE
IN A METAPHORICAL SENSE

| <i>Reference</i> | <i>Text</i> |
|------------------|---|
| Matt 9:15 | οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφρῶνος |
| Matt 23:15 | υἱὸν γεένης |
| Mark 2:19 | οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφρῶνος |
| Mark 3:17 | υἱοὶ βροντῆς |
| Luke 5:34 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τοῦ νυμφρῶνος |
| Luke 10:6 | υἱος εἰρήνης |
| Luke 16:8 | οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου (also in 20:34) |
| Luke 20:36 | τῆς ἀναστάσεως υἱοὶ |
| John 17:12 | ὁ υἱός τῆς ἀπωλείας |
| Acts 4:36 | υἱος παρακλήσεως |
| Rom 9:8 | τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας |
| Gal 4:28 | ἐπαγγελίας τέκνα |
| Eph 2:2 | τοῖς υἱοῖς τῆς ἀπειθείας (also in 5:6) |
| Eph 2:3 | τέκνα φύσει ὄργης |
| Eph 5:8 | τέκνα φωτὸς |
| Col 1:13 | τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ |
| Col 3:6 | τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας (textual?) |
| 1 Pet 1:14 | τέκνα ὑπακοῆς |
| 2 Pet 2:14 | κατάρας τέκνα |

TABLE 3

NT USES OF *φύσις* AND RELATED WORDS*

| <i>Reference</i> | <i>Text</i> |
|------------------|--|
| | <i>φύσις</i> |
| Rom 1:26 | μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρὰ φύσιν |
| Rom 2:14 | ὅταν γάρ ἔθην . . . φύσει τὰ τοῦ νόμου ποιῶσιν |
| Rom 2:27 | κρινεῖ ἡ ἐκ φύσεως ἀκροβυθστία |
| Rom 11:21 | εἰ γάρ ὁ θεὸς τῶν κατὰ φύσιν κλάδων οὐκ ἐφείσατο |

Reference

Text

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Rom 11:24 | εἰ γάρ σὺ ἐκ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἔξεκόπης ἀγριελαίου, καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ἐνεκεντρίσθης εἰς καλλιέλαιον, πόσῳ μᾶλλον οὗτοι οἱ κατὰ φύσιν ἐγκεντρισθήσονται |
| 1 Cor 11:14 | οὐδὲ ἡ φύσις αὐτὴ διδάσκει ὑμᾶς |
| Gal 2:15 | ἥμεῖς φύσει· Ιουδαῖοι |
| Gal 4:8 | ἐδουλεύσατε τοῖς φύσει μὴ οὖσιν θεοῖς |
| Eph 2:3 | ἥμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς |
| Jas 3:7 | πᾶσα γάρ φύσις θηρίων τε καὶ πετεινῶν . . . δαμάζεται . . . τῇ φύσει τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ |
| 2 Pet 1:4 | ἴνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως φυσικός |
| Rom 1:26 | μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν |
| Rom 1:27 | δομοίως τε καὶ οἱ ἄρσενες ἀφέντες τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θελείας |
| 2 Pet 2:12 | ώς ἄλογα ζῷα γεγεννημένα φυσικά φυσικῶς |
| Jude 10 | ὅσα δὲ φυσικῶς ὡς τὰ ἄλογα ζῷα ἐπίστανται φύω |
| Luke 8:6 | φυὲν ἐξηράνθη διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν ἱκμάδα |
| Luke 8:8 | φυὲν ἐποίησεν καρπὸν ἐκατονταπλασίονα |
| Heb 12:15 | μὴ τις βίᾳ πικρίας ἀνω φύουσα ἐνοχλῇ |

*Adapted from W. F. Moulton and A. S. Geden, *A Concordance to the Greek Testament*, rev. by H. K. Moulton (5th ed.; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1978) 997.

APPENDIX I

ORIGINAL SIN AND GOD'S WRATH: ARGUMENTS AND ANSWERS

- I. *Argument from the Context of Ephesians 2:1-3:* The context treats actual sin, not original sin. (See Abbott, *Ephesians*, 45-46; Foulkes, *Ephesians*, 71; Meyer, *Ephesians*, 365-66; George B. Stevens, *Pauline Theology* [NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895] 152ff.)
Answer: 2:1 speaks not only of actual sin but also of sin as a state of separation from God. Even so, this may be an example of an argument leading up to a climactic statement, *ab effectu ad causam*.
- II. *Argument from the Word Order of Ephesians 2:3c:* The word order of the phrase must be φύσει τέκνα ὀργῆς for the original sin view to be true. The position of φύσει is unemphatic. (See Abbott, *Ephesians*, 45; Meyer, *Ephesians*, 366.)
Answer: Interpretation of word order is quite subjective, but there is some reason to view φύσει in its position between τέκνα

and ὁργῆς as quite emphatic. Even if it is not emphatic it could possibly indicate that Paul was implicitly assuming hereditary moral corruption.

III. *Argument from the Time Reference of Ephesians 2:3c:* The original sin view “supposes καὶ ἡμεθά to refer to, or at least include, a time prior to ἐν οἷς ἀν.” (See Abbott, *Ephesians*, 45.)

Answer: Nothing in the original sin view necessitates this supposition.”*Ημεθά* does refer to the same time as the previous context. At that time, before the Ephesians were converted, they were deserving objects of God’s wrath due to innate depravity.

IV. *Argument from the Analogy of Scripture:* The ecclesiastical dogma of original sin is not Pauline. Paul views actual sin as the reason why man is under God’s wrath. (See Meyer, *Ephesians*, 366.)

Answer: This argument begs the question. It is true that Paul in other contexts views wrath coming upon men due to actual sin (Rom 1:18; Eph 5:6; e.g.). However, sin, like beauty, “is more than skin deep.” The Scripture speaks of man’s conception in a state of sin (Psa 51:5), of his sinful heart (Jer 17:9; Matt 15:17-19), of his sinful mind set (Eph 2:3ab; 4:17-19). The sinful heart (a term implying an innate nature or essence) is viewed in Matt 15:19 and Eph 4:18 as the root of sinful activity. Ultimately man’s nature causes him to be under God’s wrath.

V. *Argument from Romans 11:17-24:* If Paul views the Jews as inborn children of wrath, he contradicts his teaching in Rom 11:17-24 where he speaks of Jews as the “natural branches” of the olive tree of the theocracy. (See Meyer, *Ephesians*, 366.)

Answer: Φύσις in Rom 11 is used in an illustration of Israel’s favored position in God’s program. The natural branches of the olive tree are Jews who are the objects of God’s theocratic dealings. The unnatural branches are Gentiles who may become objects of God’s grace in Christ. Paul’s perspective in Rom 11 is national and positional: the Jews naturally enjoyed God’s special theocratic favor and the Gentiles did not. The perspective in Eph 2:3 is quite different. Here individuals, both Jews and Gentiles, are viewed as naturally objects of God’s wrath. This is no more contradictory than the words of Hos 3:2. Israel’s special position in God’s plan is viewed as a reason for her judgment.

VI. *Argument from 1 Cor 7:14:* Paul could not have taught an inborn liability to wrath for this would contradict his words about the children of believers in 1 Cor 7:14. (See Meyer, *Ephesians*, 366-67.)

Answer: 1 Cor 7:14 is admittedly a difficult passage. It seems best to view the sanctification and holiness spoken of here not in an experiential moral sense. Instead there is a sense in which the unsaved marriage partner and the children in such a home are set apart by the believer there. This is a matter of privilege and exposure to Christian testimony. It should be noted, however, that whatever "holiness" is spoken of in the verse is true of the unbelieving adult as well as the children. This weakens Meyer's argument considerably.

VII. *Argument from Matthew 18:2ff; 19:14ff:* This view of original sin contradicts the words of Jesus Christ concerning children, especially His promise that whoever becomes like a child will enter the Kingdom of heaven. (See Meyer, *Ephesians*, 367.)

Answer: Our Lord's exhortation was not to become "morally neutral" or "innocent" as infants are sometime supposed to be. Instead His emphasis evidently was upon the humility (Matt 18:4) and faith (18:6) of the children. It is necessary to exercise child-like faith to enter the Kingdom. Jesus was certainly not making a blanket statement on infant salvation.



EARLY AND MEDIEVAL JEWISH INTERPRETATION OF THE SONG OF SONGS

WESTON W. FIELDS

The Song of Songs provides an excellent background for discussing various hermeneutical approaches to the Old Testament. This grows out of the large number of different interpretations attached through the ages to this enigmatic book. If one is to understand Christian interpretation, especially the roots of allegorization, he must first understand Jewish interpretation of the book before Christianity and afterward. Thus, in this article interpretation of the Song is traced from the period of the Septuagint translation through the Mishnah and Talmud to the medieval period in order to show when and with what effect allegorization came to be the standard method of interpreting the book.

* * *

INTRODUCTION

If the language of the Song of Songs is enigmatic, and the canonicity sometimes disputed, its interpretation is both of these combined. As one surveys the vast array of differing interpretations of this song over the centuries, he can certainly sympathize with the rather secular perception of one interpreter who says that "it is one of the pranks of history that a poem so obviously about hungry passion has caused so much perplexity and has provoked such a plethora of bizarre interpretations."¹

But it is the very obviousness of the sexual love of the Song that is the root of this variety; for, to the Western Christian Mind explicit statements about sexual love and detailed descriptions of the anatomy of the human body, all discussed under a number of unmistakable and rather graphic similes and metaphors, are most embarrassing to read in a book of the Bible. Even later Jewish writers,

¹William E. Phipps, "The Plight of the Song of Songs," *JAAR* 42 (1974) 15.

apparently influenced by their Christian counterparts, found the sexual descriptions of the Song rather too lucid.²

The history of the interpretation of the Song is thus largely the history of Jewish and Christian interpreters' methods of dealing with this embarrassment, and their commentaries are more often commentaries on themselves and their times than on the Song.

If one accepts the hermeneutical principle that the primary goal of the interpreter is to discover the original meaning and intention of the author of a biblical book, he must try as much as is possible to let himself be controlled in his interpretations by the same cultural norms which controlled the writers. In the case of the Song of Solomon, the interpreter must be especially careful that he does not judge the book on the basis of his Western culture, question its canonicity, and allegorize its historical meaning away so completely that its original intention, meaning, and use are entirely obscured. If a great many of the interpreters over the centuries have been unable to do that, let judgment not fall too harshly upon them: one must first judge himself.

An important piece in the hermeneutical puzzle is the contribution of early Jewish scholars. The song is, after all, Jewish in origin and use. And while ancient indications about its early interpretation are neither authoritative nor binding, they are often instructive—even essential—for understanding interpretations that came later, especially during medieval, reformation, and modern times.

This article, therefore, explores Jewish interpretation of the Song of Solomon from the earliest records of such endeavors through the medieval period in order to demonstrate that (1) there is no record of allegorization in the earliest period and (2) allegorization became the predominant method of interpretation in the later periods. A subsequent study may trace Christian interpretation from the apostolic era up until the Reformation in order to show similarities and contrasts between the two groups in general.

Such a survey of past interpretations is useful not only because it is never wise to ignore the work of those who have previously struggled with these same questions, but also because seen in the more distinct perspective of time, some interpretations condemn themselves and others commend themselves, and the field of possibilities becomes at once smaller and more comprehensible.

²On the subject of Jewish attitudes toward sex and related matters, including adultery and divorce, see Louis M. Epstein, *Sex Laws and Customs in Judaism* (New York: Ktav, 1967).

THE SEPTUAGINT

One might have expected to put the interpretation found in the Targumim first in the line of Jewish interpretations, but for reasons explained below, it is probably best to consider them later than some other interpretations.

Since all translations in some sense reflect the views of the translators, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the LXX in some ways reflects the views of the Jews who made it,³ however unorthodox these Alexandrian Jews are supposed to have been. If the Letter of Aristeas is accepted substantially as it stands (as it was at least up to and especially by Augustine, who placed it almost on the level of the original text), then the translation of the LXX would be dated about the middle of the third century B.C., during the reign of Ptolemy II.⁴ Scholars are not generally disposed to accept it as entirely genuine, however, and so usually date the translation later, a position most recently defended again by Würthwein.⁵ But whatever the decision on that matter, even Jellicoe suggests a *terminus ante quem* of 170 B.C.⁶

It has been thought by some that an allegorical interpretation is already evident in the LXX translation of the Song of Songs. The main passage adduced to prove this alleged allegorism is 4:8, where the LXX renders אַמְנָה מִרְאֵשׁ by ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς πίστεως, “from the top of faith,” for the Hebrew “from the top of Amana.” But the weakness of this argument is obvious to anyone familiar with the inconsistent, sometimes almost capricious way that the LXX, Josephus, and others transliterate and translate Hebrew proper names. It is further disproved by the rendering of תִּרְצָה, “Tirzah,” by εὐδοκία, “delight,” (6:4), and of בָּתֶן-נָדָב, “noble daughter,” by θύγατερ Ναδάβ “daughter of Nadab,” (7:2), “whence it is evident that the Septuagint frequently

³Orlinsky cautions, however, that just because the LXX translators often rendered the text literally word-for-word does not mean that they understood it that way (Harry M. Orlinsky, “The Septuagint As Holy Writ and the Philosophy of the Translators,” *HUCA* 46 [1975] 106).

⁴Augustine, *The City of God*, 18:42, 43; Sidney Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968) 47. Cf. also the very excellent “History of the Septuagint Text” in Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta*, Vol. I (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935) xxii-xxx; and Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 49-68.

⁵Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, 51-53. Cf. H. B. Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (2nd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1902) 1-28; and Paul Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1959) 209-15. For an introduction to and the full text of the letter, see Herbert Andrews, “The Letter of Aristeas” in *APOT*, 2. 83-122.

⁶Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, 49.

mistook *proper names* for appellatives and adjectives, and vice versa.⁷ There does not seem to be any indication otherwise that the early Jews allegorized the Song, though such a practice would not have been particularly surprising even in this early period.

BEN SIRA

Dated about the end of the fourth century B.C. to the upper half of the third century B.C.,⁸ Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus, Sirach, Ben Sirach) is possibly older than the LXX translation.⁹ The author often approaches an artistic level of Hebrew comparable to that of the OT, so steeped was he in the classical tradition.¹⁰

The first of the passages which have been used to prove that Ben Sira reflects allegorical interpretation of the Song of Solomon is 47:17. Speaking in an apostrophe to Solomon, 47:17 says: ἐν φόδαις καὶ παροίμιαις καὶ παραβολαῖς καὶ ἐν ἐρμηνείαις ἀπεθαύμασάν σε χῶραι, “by your songs, proverbs,¹¹ parables, and interpretations¹² you caused the people astonishment.” This is the Greek translation of the Hebrew words שִׁיר, לְשָׁמֶן, חִידָה and מַלְיָכָה.¹³ Ben Sira was referring to all the works generally accorded him by the OT (Prov. 1:6 and 1 Kgs 4:32).¹⁴ By this reference to Solomon’s παραβολαῖς αἰωνιγάτων, “riddles, dark sayings,” in 47:15, some have concluded that he was referring to hidden allegories in the Song of Solomon.¹⁵ It seems, however, that since Solomon’s songs are mentioned separately, Ben Sira is not referring to inherent allegories in the Song of Solomon.

⁷Christian David Ginsburg, *The Song of Songs and Coheleth* (New York: Ktav, reprinted, 1970) 21.

⁸G. H. Box and W. O. E. Oesterley, “Sirach,” *APOT*, 1. 294. For a short introduction and more up-to-date bibliography, see Leonhard Rost, *Judaism Outside the Hebrew Canon*, trans. David E. Green (Nashville: Abingdon, 1971) 64-69.

⁹Box and Oesterley, “Sirach,” 294.

¹⁰Tadeuz Penar, *Northwest Semitic Philology and the Hebrew Fragments of Ben Sira* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1975) 2.

¹¹*LSJ*, 1342.

¹²Ibid., 690.

¹³For the usage of these and other words in Sirach, see D. Barthélémy and O. Rickenbacher, eds., *Konkordanz zum Hebräischen Sirach* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973). For further comparison between the Hebrew text and the LXX, see Elmar Camilo Dos Santos, *An Expanded Hebrew Index for the Harch-Redpath Concordance to the Septuagint* (Jerusalem: Dugith, n.d.). See also Yigael Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1965).

¹⁴Box and Oesterley translate from the Hebrew: “By thy songs, parables, dark speeches, and satires thou didst cause astonishment to the peoples (“Sirach,” 498).

¹⁵There is a textual variant here where the Hebrew text is mutilated. Box and Oesterley translate “And didst gather parables like the sea,” following another variant (*ibid.*, 497).

THE BOOK OF WISDOM

The apocryphal book of Wisdom (of Solomon) has also been supposed to support the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Solomon. Dating from about the middle of the second century B.C.,¹⁶ the book states in 8:2, representing Solomon as speaking to Wisdom: Ταύτην ἐφίλησα καὶ ἔξεζήτησα ἐκ νεότητός μου καὶ ἔζήτησα νύμφην ἀγαγέσθαι ἐμαυτῷ καὶ ἐραστῆς ἐγενόμην τοῦ κάλλους αὐτῆς, “Her I loved and sought since my youth to bring her (home) for my own bride, and I became an admirer of her beauty.” Because Solomon is here made to speak of Wisdom as his bride, it has been supposed that this is an explanation of the Song of Songs, as though the brides were the same. But only a perusal of the two books will convince the reader that there is no intentional resemblance whatever.¹⁷

JOSEPHUS

Josephus (A.D. 37-95) is supposed to have understood the Song in an allegorical sense, but it is never quoted by him. The ground of this contention is his arrangement of the books of the OT. Of the twenty-two books he mentions as canonical (τὰ δικαίως [θεῖα] πεπιστεύμενα),¹⁸ he describes five as Mosaic, ascribes thirteen to “the prophets,” and αἱ δὲ λοιπαὶ τέσσαρες ὑμνους εἰς τὸν θεὸν καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὑποθήκας τοῦ βίου περιέχουσιν, “the remaining four are hymns to God and rules for the life of men” (Psalms, Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes).¹⁹ Thus, he would have placed the Song among the prophets, and would have interpreted it allegorically.²⁰ But since Josephus also puts such historical books as Esther and Ruth among the prophets, it cannot follow that all “prophetic” writings were interpreted allegorically automatically, though it is true that both of them were sometimes interpreted allegorically as well.²¹ Furthermore, Leiman makes a good case for putting the Song in the last classification.²²

¹⁶Samuel Holmes, “Wisdom of Solomon,” *APOT*, 1. 520; cf. Rost, *Judaism outside the Hebrew Canon*, 56-60.

¹⁷A conclusion reached as far back as Ginsburg (*Song of Songs and Coheleth*, p. 23).

¹⁸Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1:8:39 (in the Loeb Classical Library edition).

¹⁹Ibid., 1:8:40.

²⁰See Johann Friedrich Kleuker, *Samlung der Gedichte Salomons sonst der Hohelied oder Lied der Lieder* (Hamburg: ben Philipp Heinrich Perrenon, 1780) 54; and W. E. Henstenberg, *Das Hohelied Salomonis* (Berlin: Verlag von Ludwig Dehmigfe, 1853) 255.

²¹Ginsburg prefers to place the book among the last four mentioned, though he does not explain how the five are then added up by Josephus as four (Ginsburg, *Song of Songs and Coheleth*, 23).

²²Sid Z. Leiman, *The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture*, vol. 47 of *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences* (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1976) 32-33.

4 EZRA

The book of 4 Ezra, also dating from about the middle of the second century B.C., is sometimes claimed as one of the earliest indications of the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Solomon by Jews.²³ Concerning this Audet states: "En premier lieu, il est inexact d'affirmer que 'les Juifs ont toujours entendu le Cantique au sens allégorique.'"²⁴ He contends that "le plus ancien témoignage connu d'une telle interprétation est celui de IV Esdras, V, 24-26; VII, 26, et encore est-il loin d'être décisif."²⁵ It would appear that the passage is less than decisive indeed, but following are the verses that have been used: "And I said: O Lord my Lord, out of all the woods of the earth and all the trees thereof thou hast chosen thee one vine; out of all the lands of the world thou hast chosen thee one planting ground; out of all the flowers of the world thou hast chosen thee one lily; out of all the depths of the sea thou hast replenished for thyself one river; out of all the cities that have been built thou hast sanctified Sion unto thyself" (4 Ezra 5:23-26a).²⁶

The figures allegedly taken from the Song of Solomon and interpreted allegorically are the lily (Cant 2:2); the dove (Cant 2:14); and the stream (Cant 4:15). Box accepts this as an indication that the allegorical interpretation was in vogue,²⁷ but the hesitancy of Audet to draw this conclusion is commendable. Even if this would prove an allegorical interpretation by the writer of 4 Ezra, it would not prove such was normative for all Jews at that time.

THE TALMUD

The work known as the Talmud (completed ca. 5th-6th centuries A.D.) consists primarily of two parts: the Mishnah, which constitutes the text, and the Gemara, which constitutes the commentary by the Amoraim or public lecturers on the Mishnah. The study of the Mishnah was pursued in two main geographical locations: Babylon and Tiberias. The Gemara from Babylon is called the Babylonian

Leiman puts Job among the prophetic books so that the last section of Josephus contains Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. See also Leiman, ed., *The Canon and Masorah of the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Ktav, 1974).

²³G. H. Box, "4 Ezra," *APOT*, 2. 552-53; Rost, *Judaism outside the Hebrew Canon*, 120-25.

²⁴"In the first place, it is inaccurate to conclude that 'the Jews always interpreted the Song allegorically'" (Jean-Paul Audet, "Le Sens du Cantique des Cantiques," *RB* 62 [1955] 200).

²⁵"The most ancient testimony known of such an interpretation is that of 4 Ezra 5:24-26; 7:26, and yet it is far from being decisive" (*ibid.*).

²⁶Box, "4 Ezra," 571.

²⁷*Ibid.*, n. on v 23.

Talmud, and that from Tiberias is called the Jerusalem Talmud, and both of these together with the Mishnah are called the Talmud, though the distinction is generally made between the Babylonian and Jerusalem or Palestinian.²⁸

In the Mishnah, Yadaim 3:5, there are some interesting statements about the Song of Songs. One is the assertion, quoted more fully above, of its canonicity: "All the Holy Scriptures render the hands unclean. The Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes render the hands unclean."²⁹ It is further stated that Rabbi Akiba said: "God forbid!—no man in Israel ever disputed about the Song of Songs (that he should say) that it does not render the hands unclean, for all the ages are not worth the day on which the Song of Songs was given to Israel; for all the Writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies."³⁰ This is to some an indication that Rabbi Akiba interpreted the Song allegorically. It is true that it is difficult to understand his hyperbolic language if he did not.

It is quite evident that by the time the Talmud was complete the allegorical interpretation of the Song was accepted. From a gemara in Tractate Sanhedrin comes this fascinating application of Cant 7:3 to the Sanhedrin itself:

Gemara: Whence is this [i.e., the seating of the Sanhedrin] deduced? Said R. Aha b. Hanina: From (Solomon's Song, vii.3): "Thy navel is like a round goblet which lacketh not the mixed wine." By "navel" is meant the Sanhedrin. And why were they named navel? Because they used to sit in the middle of the world (according to the Talmud, Jerusalem was the middle of the world and the Temple was in the centre of Jerusalem), and also protected the whole world. And why were they named a "round goblet"? Because the Sanhedrin sat in a circle: "Which lacketh not the mixed wine"—i.e., if one wished to

²⁸Hermann L. Strack, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1931) 5-6; cf. Curt Leviant, ed., *Masterpieces of Hebrew Literature* (New York: Ktav, 1969) 97-98; R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (reprinted; New York: Ktav, 1975); Alan Corré, *Understanding the Talmud* (New York: Ktav, 1975); Richard N. Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1976) 159; Irving A. Agus, review of Abraham I. Katsh, *Ginze Talmud Babli*, *JQR* 68 (1977) 121-26; and David Weiss Halivni, *Contemporary Methods of the Study of Talmud*, *JJS* 30 (1979) 192-201.

²⁹Herbert Danby, ed. and trans., *The Mishnah* (Oxford: Oxford University, reprinted, 1974) 781. As background for the Mishnah, see Jacob Neusner, *The Modern Study of the Mishnah* (Leiden: Brill, 1973) and J. Weingreen, *From Bible to Mishnah* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1976). On the relationship between Christian hermeneutics and Rabbinics, see Raymond F. Surburg, "Rabbinical Writings of the Early Christian Centuries and New Testament Interpretation," *CTM* 43 (1979) 273-85.

³⁰Danby, *The Mishnah*, 782. For the connection of the Song with the dances performed on the 15th of Ab, as related in the Mishnah, cf. M. H. Segal, "The Song of Songs," *VT* 12 (1962) 485-87.

leave, it must be seen that besides him twenty-three remained, and if there were less, he must not.³¹

Thus, it is during the Christian era that one first encounters indubitably allegorical interpretations of the Song of Solomon at the hands of the Jews.

MIDRASH

The Midrashim are biblical expositions coming from the Mishnaic and Talmudic periods. They consist of Halakah,³² statements about law, and Haggada, statements of a non-halakhic character, principally something devotional, or something which "transcends the first impression conveyed by the scriptural expression."³³ Most of the Midrashic statements on the Song would be Haggada.

A specimen of such allegory is found in *Mekilta* (*Exodus*), *Shirata*, *Beshallah*, § 3:

R. Akiba said: I will speak of the beauty and praise of God before all the nations. They ask Israel and say, 'What is your beloved more than another beloved that "thou dost so charge us" (*Cant.* V, 9), 'that you die for Him, and that you are slain for Him' as it says, 'Therefore till death do they love Thee' (a pun on *Cant.* I, 3), and 'For thy sake are we slain all the day' (*Ps. XLIV*, 22). 'Behold,' they say, 'You are beautiful, you are mighty, come and mingle with us.' But the Israelites reply, 'Do you know Him: We will tell you a portion of His renown; my beloved is white and ruddy; the chiefest among ten thousand' (*Cant.* V, 10). When they hear Israel praise Him thus, they say to the Israelites, 'We will go with you,' as it is said, 'Whither has your beloved turned him that we may seek him with you?' (*Cant.* VI, 1). But the Israelites say, 'You have no part or lot in Him,' as it is said, 'My beloved is mine, and I am His' (*Cant.* II, 16).³⁴

There are other midrashim of another sort, such as the one which reports that "On the day on which Solomon married Necha, Pharaoh's daughter, the foundation of Rome—Israel's persecutor and oppressor—was laid by the angel Michael."³⁵ The Midrash on 1:5, "I am black but comely," states: "So says the house of Israel: I am, to my knowledge, black, yet my God considers me comely."³⁶

³¹ Michael L. Rodkinson, ed. and trans., *New Edition of the Babylonian Talmud*, vols. 7, 8: section Jurisprudence (Damages), Tract Sanhedrin, 110.

³² On which see Ze'ev W. Falk, *Introduction to the Jewish Law of the Second Commonwealth*, 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1972).

³³ Strack, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, 6-7.

³⁴ Cited in C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe, *A Rabbinic Anthology* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1938) 101-2, §263.

³⁵ Samuel Rapaport, *A Treasury of the Midrash* (New York: Ktav, 1968) 172.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 167.

But even within the framework of midrashic interpretation, the use of the book was limited. "It was prohibited to use a text of Canticles from which one would develop a homily having a shameful or odious implication."³⁷ As noted above, Akiba, for example warns that "any one who would dare treat this book as a secular love poem forfeits his share in the World to Come."³⁸ Another passage carried the consequence even further: "the penalty would not be restricted to the individual but would jeopardize the welfare of all mankind."³⁹

There is a considerable difference between the Commentaries and Midrashim on the "Song of Songs" and those on the other books of T'nach. The principle (Shabbath 63a) **אין מקרא יוצא מידי פשוטו**, that no verse of the Torah may be divorced from its plain meaning, does not apply to **שיר השירים** [the Song of Songs]. On the contrary, our sages explain (Sanhedrin 101a) "Those who recite a verse of **שיר השירים** as they would a common song, or who read its verses in inappropriate circumstances, bring evil to the world, because the Torah wraps itself in sackcloth, and standing before the Holy One, blessed be He, complains: "Master of the World, Your children have made me a harp on which mockers play. . . ."⁴⁰

One final sample will suffice to demonstrate midrashic interpretation. On Cant 1:2, "For your love is better than wine," the midrash says:

Here the words of the Torah are compared to wine. Just as wine makes the heart of man rejoice, as written in Psalms 104:15 **וַיְשִׁמְחֵךְ לְבָב אָנֹשׁ** "and wine makes glad the heart of man," so does the Torah, Psalms 19:9 **פָקוֹדֵי הָיִשְׁרָם מִשְׁמָחֵי בָּל** "the ordinances of the Lord are right, making the heart rejoice."—Just as wine brings joy to the body, so do the words of the Lord comfort the soul: Ps. 94:19 **נֶפֶשִׁי תְּהֻנָּמִיךְ יְשֻׁעָנוּ** "Thy comforts delight my soul."—Furthermore, the older the wine, the better it becomes, and with the words of the Torah, the longer they are instilled in man the more effective they become.⁴¹

TARGUM

Because the legends in it seem to be rather late, and because it makes mention of the Gemara (the last part of the Talmud, completed ca. A.D. 450-500), the Targum on the Song of Solomon is

³⁷ Samuel Tobias Lachs, "Prolegomena to Canticles Rabba," *JQR* 55 (1965) 237, citing *Cant. R.* 1:12 (2:4).

³⁸ *Ibid.*, citing *Tosef. Sanh.* 12, 10.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, citing *Sanh.* 101a.

⁴⁰ Yitzhak I. Broch, *The "Song of Songs" As Echoed in Its Midrash* (New York: Philipp Feldheim, n.d.) 8-9.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 12. A further instance of such midrashic interpretation of the Song may be seen in Menahem M. Kasher, ed., *Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation*, 9 (reprinted; New York: Ktav, 1979), the comments on Exod 19:10, p. 74.

usually dated considerably later than much of the other targumic material. Ginsburg argues for a date about the middle of the sixth century, when the Talmuds would have been already complete,⁴² but Loewe would date it even later yet.⁴³

As an aid to the interpretation of the Song the Targum is almost useless, because it allegorizes it beyond recognition.⁴⁴ It is, in fact, considered by some to be primarily an anti-Christian (pro-Jewish) apologetic.⁴⁵ But as a hermeneutical warning, the Targum is priceless: it shows where the unbridled allegorization of the Song may lead.

A few examples from this Targum will suffice to demonstrate its character. On 1:2, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine," the Targum says: "Solomon, the prophet said: Blessed be the Name of the Lord, who hath given us the Law by the hand of Moses, the great Scribe—a Law inscribed upon the two tablets of stone, and hath given us the six orders of the Mishnah and the Gemarah by oral tradition, and communed with us face to face, as a man that kisses his fellow out of the abundance of his affection, loving us, as He does, more than the seventy nations."⁴⁶

On 2:1, "I am the narcissus of Sharon, the rose of the valleys," the Targum comments: "The Assembly of Israel speaketh: As long as the Sovereign of the Universe suffers His Divine Presence to dwell in my midst, I am like the narcissus fresh from the Garden of Eden, my actions are comely as the rose in the plain of the flower-garden of Eden."⁴⁷

⁴²Ginsburg, *Song of Songs and Coheleth*, 28.

⁴³Raphael Loewe, "Apologetic Motifs in the Targum to the Song of Songs," in *Biblical Motifs*, ed. by Alexander Altmann (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1966) 163-69. For the hermeneutics of the targumim, see Daniel Patte, *Early Jewish Hermeneutic in Palestine* (SBLDS 22; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975) 55-81, and for a bibliography of literature up to 1966, see R. Le Déaut, *Introduction à la Littérature Targumique* (Rome: Institut Biblique Pontifical, 1966); and up to 1972 in Bernard Grossfeld, *A Bibliography of Targum Literature* (2 vols.; New York: Ktav, 1972).

⁴⁴ Still, John Gill considered it valuable enough to append to his commentary, possibly because he, too, allegorized the Song (John Gill, *An Exposition of the Book of Solomon's Song, Commonly Called Canticles* [London: Aaron Ward, 1728]).

⁴⁵Loewe, "Apologetic Motifs in the Targum to the Song of Songs," 173-84.

⁴⁶ Herman Gollancz, trans., "The Targum to 'The Song of Songs,'" in *The Targum to the Five Megilloth*, edited by Bernard Grossfeld (New York: Hermon Press, 1973) 180.

⁴⁷ For the text of the Targum, cf. מקראות גדלוֹת ג, ad loc. Texts with Babylonian pointing can be found in Alexander Sperber, **א-ב-תבי הקדש בארמיית כרך 6** (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968); and Raphael Hai Melamed, "The Targum to Canticles According to Six Yemen MSS, compared with the 'Textus Receptus'" (ed. De Lagarde)," *JQR* 10 (1920) 377-410 and 12 (1921) 57-117. He notes (10, p. 380) that an official Targum to the Hagiographa never existed, but that all the books except Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel had Targumim, of which this one is a part. For a further interesting description of this Targum, and a comparison of the midrash with the

The Targum, as Joüon notes,⁴⁸ apparently developed its allegorical interpretation from the kinds of statements found in the Midrash. It takes the Song to be a representation of the history of Israel beginning with the Exodus through the building of the third temple, and the coming of the Messiah, of which there are two mentioned: Messiah ben David and Messiah ben Ephraim.⁴⁹

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The article set out to demonstrate that (1) there is no record of allegorization in the earliest period of Jewish history; and (2) that allegorization became the predominant method of interpretation among the Jews in the later periods. It was shown that no allegorization can be discovered in the LXX (Hebrew canon), Ben Sira, the book of Wisdom (of Solomon), Josephus, or 4 Ezra. But beginning with the Talmud, and continuing with the Midrashim and Targumim, allegorization took over as the accepted method for interpreting the Song.

Though the history given here is only partial, and needs to be complemented by a study of concurrent Christian interpretation, as well as an investigation of both Christian and Jewish interpretation in subsequent centuries, it does serve to point out that once one has loosed himself from the moorings of literal interpretation (in the best and widest sense of that term) he has precluded any assurance that the composer of the Song has communicated to him what he intended to communicate. Through allegorization the reader of the Song will no doubt receive some kind of communication; but it is highly doubtful that it will be what the author intended to say. And here is the problem: if the Song can say anything, then it says nothing. And that is why it is important to establish that as far as the evidence now available is concerned, the allegorization of the Song of Songs was not the original or even the earliest method of interpretation; it was a later development. There is, therefore, no compelling historical reason from early Jewish and early medieval interpretation for continuing allegorization of the Song today.

Targum, cf. Leon J. Liebreich, "The Benedictory Formula in the Targum to the Song of Songs," *HUCA* 18 (1944) 177-97.

⁴⁸P. Joüon, *Le Cantique des Cantiques* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne & Cie, 1909) 28.

⁴⁹Bernard Grossfeld, "Introduction," in *The Targum to the Five Megilloth*, ed. by Grossfeld, viii.



BOOK REVIEWS

The Rise of Civilization from Early Farmers to Urban Society in the Ancient Near East, by Charles L. Redman. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1978. Pp. 367. \$13.50, paper and \$22.00, cloth.

There are very few volumes which have attempted to encompass the vast subject area of this book, a feature which in itself makes it a valuable source of information. In essence, this volume represents an attempt to recreate the conditions and causes for the rise of civilization in the Ancient Near East. To quote the preface, "This book tells, within a single volume, the story of the rise of ancient Near East civilization from these early beginnings." Perhaps its most valuable feature is that it does this in one volume in which much of the archaeological and anthropological information is gathered, thereby sparing the interested person the time-consuming steps of searching out the information himself.

A quick glance at the large number of commentaries on Genesis, coupled with observing the intense interest in the book on a general level, has always elicited, on my part, the surprising observation that there is such a marked disinterest in things not stated in Genesis. In other words, there is simply no interest in events which occurred from the Flood to the rise of civilization. This feature is almost certainly traceable to the controversy over the age of the earth. Nonetheless, this disinterest is unfortunate, since a good part of man's existence on earth fits into that period. It is precisely in this area that this volume can help to redress the misemphasis of the present.

The volume at hand, however, is not without its faults and limitations. The average person will have to learn a whole new vocabulary (or at least tolerate many technical terms) in order to understand the volume. Nor is it always possible to agree with Redman's theorizing. For example, on p. 101, food gathering of both hunting and gathering groups is said to have been a comparatively easy task while by p. 111, it became increasingly difficult for sedentary man to revert back to that simple semi-sedentary state. Furthermore, the dating system is established on the basis of Carbon-14 as well as more modern methods which have produced dates unacceptable to those of us convinced of a young earth. Still, most of his dates are established through pottery and stratigraphic analysis (p. 189). On the other hand, throughout the volume, one gets the feeling that he must read more quickly lest the statements become outdated!

On the whole, however, the book will fill the needs for which it was intended. Its primary strength, in my opinion, is its plethora of charts, illustrations, and maps which are truly valuable to have in one volume. The first chapter, "The Environmental Background: Nature Sets the State," is worth the price of the book. It is as good an introduction to the geography of

the Near East as one can find. The same could be said for the intended purpose of the book. Used with discretion, it will help anyone interested in that mysterious period of time in man's history which is not discussed in Genesis.

DONALD FOWLER

Themes in Old Testament Theology, by William Dyrness. Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1979. Pp. 252. \$5.95. Paper.

The title of this volume (i.e., Themes) intimates a new approach (really a return to an older approach) among contemporary studies in OT theology. Dyrness, a systematic theologian who is quite well versed in OT studies, has provided for students and pastors alike a profitable survey of the key theological concepts of the OT. Motivated by an admirable concern that most Christians need to remedy a case of mental atrophy in the area of the theological significance of the OT (pp. 15-17), Dyrness commendably has organized and interrelated a number of themes.

A reluctance to conform the various data into *one* unifying concept does justice to a truly biblical theology. On the other hand, the author's stress upon thematic interrelationships guards against fragmentation. One excerpt will serve to illustrate his sound procedure:

We need to remind ourselves of the underlying unity of OT theology. The covenant rests on the nature of God; the law expresses the covenant relationship, and the cult and piety grow together out of the covenant relationship defined in the law. But piety does not stand alone; it naturally expressed itself in the moral life of the community, what we will discuss here as ethics. . . . Nor is wisdom . . . unrelated to all of this. It is but the description of the concrete form of life in the covenant. This unified understanding is especially important in the OT where all of life relates to God and his purposes (p. 171).

Many good definitions are the result of the abbreviated treatments of these themes; however, this abbreviation also leads to several predictable shortcomings. Periodically, anemic or eccentric generalizations are manifested. Also, in his struggles with contemporary misconceptions, there are times when the author seems to over-correct (cf., e.g., on "The Fear of the Lord," pp. 161-62). Although there are a few apparent capitulations or accommodations to modern scholarship (e.g., the Genesis account of creation and some concessions to a secular interpretation of geology, p. 66), Dyrness' conservative presuppositions are quite refreshing.

A perusal of this volume is time well spent. The following discussions are noteworthy: "Anthropomorphisms," under the heading of "Media of Revelation," pp. 43-44; "The Holiness of God" and "The Righteousness of God" under "The Character and Activity of God," pp. 51-57; the implications of God's **ךְקָה** and **אַמְנוֹנָה**, pp. 58-59; "Myth and History in the OT," pp. 68-83; the significance of man in the image of God and dominion, pp. 83-84; the significance of **לֵב** and **לֶדֶת**, pp. 89-92; the synthesis of the biblical data pertaining to covenant, p. 124; a balanced introduction to grace and law, pp. 129-30; and chapter 10, "Ethics."

GEORGE J. ZEMEK, JR.

Mastering New Testament Greek, by W. Harold Mare. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975 (reprinted 1979). Pp. 251. \$9.95.

"The approach to the study of beginning Greek in this volume . . . is neither inductive nor deductive. Rather, it is a combination of both. Right from the beginning the student is given the necessary principles of grammar which are substantially added to from lesson to lesson and combined with word frequency vocabularies, analytical charts and paradigms, all to help the student see and understand various grammatical principles of the Greek language. Then also, from the beginning the student is presented with translation exercises similar in content to the Greek text of John, through which he can put his grammar into practice." So writes (Preface) the author, Dr. W. Harold Mare, professor of NT at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

Thus, the book avoids the inherent weaknesses of a purely inductive or deductive approach to the study of beginning Greek. In addition to presenting beginning Greek grammar, Mare devotes two very helpful sections on lesson plans for both Intermediate Greek and Advanced Greek courses. These courses can be easily implemented with the use of Mare's work plus several older, standard grammars ranging from Dana and Mantey's *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (1923, 1955) to R. W. Funk's *A Beginning Intermediate Grammar of Hellenistic Greek* (1973) and Blass-Debrunner's *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament* (1973). Mare also includes in his lesson plans references to A. T. Robertson's tome, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (1931) and to the very excellent work in Classical Greek by H. W. Smyth (*Greek Grammar*, Harvard University, 1963).

This reviewer was somewhat disappointed in the omission of one of the finest Intermediate Greek grammars available today, i.e., *Syntax of New Testament Greek* by James A. Brooks and Carlton L. Winbery (University Press of America, 1979). Perhaps this work appeared upon the scene too late for Mare to incorporate it into his work. This reviewer sees Brooks and Winbery either replacing or, at least, supplementing the older work of Dana and Mantey.

Mare also includes in his textbook that which he calls Greek Reader *Texts* (taken from the Gospel of John, chaps. 1-5) and Greek Reader *Notes* with grammatical explanations for words or phrases correlated with the *Texts*. Every beginning student will find these of immense value as proficiency in translation is gained. Supplemental practice sentences (English to Greek) are also provided for the student to correlate with the information learned in Lessons 5-37.

One small section of the book is devoted to sample diagramming of biblical verses to illustrate most of the constructions found in Scripture. Every student (and instructor) will find that these samples will answer most of the questions which arise concerning diagramming. Mare, like others, has his own structural scheme for diagramming. This reviewer would like to have seen one long Pauline hypotactic sentence diagrammed and one illustration of how Mare diagrams a nominative and an accusative absolute (although it is assumed that the sample genitive absolute, p. 187, gives sufficient clues).

Also, more samples of the diagramming of participles (both attributive and circumstantial) would have been helpful.

Throughout the book Mare adds tidbits of information that are not readily found in other elementary Greek works. One minor negative criticism is that his chart on noun accents (p. 4) is more confusing than clarifying and could be omitted without detriment to the book. Machen's (*New Testament Greek for Beginners*, Macmillan Company, 1923) simplistic presentation of accents is still preferable to this reviewer. Mare's treatment of proclitics and enclitics is also somewhat skimpy. Overall, Mare's work is filled with challenging parsing exercises and, if utilized, should strengthen this area of weakness in most students.

The book terminates with several helpful charts covering morphology, conjugations, declensions, word formation analyses, and much additional helpful information, including expressions in modern Greek and an excellent vocabulary section (Greek to English and vice versa).

Unlike Machen, and a few others, the format of this book (like Clarence B. Hale's *Let's Study Greek*, Moody, 1957) tends to be a little imposing to "frightened" newcomers to the wonderful world of NT Greek studies. However, that problem is overshadowed by the book's obvious improvement over most of the current elementary grammars.

In summary, I am delighted to see the publication of this fine work and it undoubtedly (and deservedly) will find its way into many classrooms for years to come. The author is to be commended for a job well done!

JOHN A. SPROULE

Curtis Vaughan and Virtus E. Gideon, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament*. Nashville: Broadman, 1979. Pp. 236. \$9.95.

The Greek grammar of Vaughan and Gideon (VG), subtitled "A Workbook Approach to Intermediate Grammar," is a welcome addition to the spectrum of intermediate grammars available. It is one of those books which one wishes he would have written because it will be used widely for some time to come.

The book steers a middle course between the more traditional, but now in many ways outmoded, approaches of Dana and Mantey or A. T. Robertson's (ATR) shorter grammar, and the more linguistically oriented grammar of Funk (which is meant to be both a beginning and intermediate grammar). It will be necessary, therefore, for those familiar with modern linguistic theory and terminology, to supplement VG in the areas of phonology and morphology to the extent that such topics need to be covered in an intermediate course. But having to supplement is not nearly so difficult as constantly correcting one of the older grammars like Dana and Mantey. And perhaps topics like phonology do not need much discussion in an intermediate class anyway.

Among the more prominent theories of teaching intermediate Greek, the two most prominent seem to be the "grammar book" theory and the "reading" theory. VG combine both of these, but apparently lean toward the latter. Those who teach according to the "grammar book" theory evidently believe

that the way to learn to read Greek is to learn lists and lists of morphological and syntactical classifications. Those who teach according to the "reading" theory evidently believe that once one has mastered the basic points of syntax and morphology, particularly that of the verb, he is ready to begin volume reading, for it is native intuition that modern students of Greek lack most, and the only way to effect a partial remedy for that is to read large quantities of text. While VG is not organized around large quantities of text, it is organized around reading, and in the course of its fifty-four lessons (which can be done easily at the rate of one per day), the student will have entirely read 1 Thessalonians and 1 Peter. Again, it will be necessary to supplement this reading with large portions from the Gospels and Acts (for those who take the "reading" approach), but the reading of these two books is certainly a good beginning.

One of the most helpful aspects of the book is its inclusion of diagramming for the explanation of grammatical constructions. While it uses the traditional mode of diagramming, which may not have the linguistic cogency of, for example, a tagmemic hierarchical diagram, many syntactical phenomena are capable of description in this form, and students will undoubtedly find this aspect of the grammar helpful.

Following the practice of ATR, VG lists the part of speech ($\tauὰ μέρη τῆς λέξεως$) in Greek subtitles, which is commendable once again from the standpoint of the linguist. One must constantly fight the impression students somehow acquire that NT Greek has only recently been perfectly understood, and that all the English classifications of traditional grammar attached to the language in grammars of lineal descent from the period of the Renaissance were originally attached to it in the first century A.D. Only if understood as modern inventions can such descriptions of usage be truly helpful, and the contrast between what is given a Greek label and what is not points up some, though not all, of these distinctions.

Those who use the eight-case system of classification will be happy with VG because it not only uses it, but explains it well. And no matter what one who leans toward Tagmemic Grammar (like the reviewer), or one who leans toward Structuralist Grammar (like Funk), may think about such an eight-case system of classification, the fact is that one must know it not only just because so many of the reference grammars use it, but because it has been a useful descriptive tool for a very long time. One should be flexible enough that he can "use any of the systems," as I once heard a slightly irritated teacher of mine reply to a student who wanted to make momentous exegetical distinctions upon the basis of such (contrived) differences in classification. Perhaps the solution for that debate would be for R. E. Longacre to simplify his *An Anatomy of Speech Notions*, and apply it to intermediate NT Greek.

VG has, perhaps, contributed most in its discussion of the verb and verbals like the participle and infinitive. It chooses to use the word "mode" instead of "mood" in its description of the perspective of the writer. "Mood," it says, is a "word which suggests the speaker's *attitude of mind* when a statement is made." "Mode," on the other hand "suggests the *manner* in which the statement is made" (p. 98, n. 1). This explanation of "mode" is succinct and clear, and will break new ground for many students.

VG's discussion of tense is just as clear, and is free from the overstatements about tense that sometimes characterize grammatical discussions by biblical scholars. Its discussion of the aorist is balanced and will not lead students into some of the excesses of inference from this tense for which commentators are notorious. Its explanation of *aktionsart* is helpful, and its system of classifying the usages of the participles is particularly useful.

The first appendix, entitled, "Helps for Identifying Verbs" might have been entitled "Important Morphemes and What They Mean" because without using the word "morpheme" they list the various morphemes of the verb and give advice on what to look for in identifying tense, voice, and mode.

The second appendix consists of "Guidelines for Translation." One could have wished for a more thorough discussion of what translation is and is not from a linguist's point of view, for translation, after all, is the primary goal of the study of Greek. But what is said here is a good start, as long as number 2 ("Take up each word in order and as nearly as possible translate it in the order in which it appears in the Greek sentence") is balanced by number 4 ("When you have studied thoroughly each word in a sentence and feel that you have a grasp of the meaning of the passage, you are ready to translate the total idea into English").

One could add that translation, in order to be translation, must be the transference of *meaning*, insofar as that is possible, from one language to another. And perhaps one should go farther than just meaning alone, because the phonology, morphology, syntax—and one must not forget, such things as grammatical hierarchies—all convey more than lexical definitions in a language; they convey impressions and elicit responses. It is for this reason that a translation should seek to evoke the same response in its receptor language as the original text did in the original language—again, insofar as possible.

It should, furthermore, be stressed that "words" do not have meaning inherent in themselves. That is to say that no combination of phonemes by itself has meaning. Only the usage of this combination of sounds in a context provides meaning, and the context is more likely to be meaningful if it consists of not just a sentence, but at least of a paragraph. These are important considerations, especially for scholars of the biblical languages, since there seems to be a very ancient tradition of creating pseudo-languages in translations of the Bible—languages with the phonology and morphology of the receptor language and a hybrid of syntactical features from the source and receptor languages. That is not translation, and no theory of inspiration, no matter how rigid can be pressed into support of such linguistically facile practices. One must remember when he is teaching a class of intermediate Greek students that he is teaching a group of future translators—whether for the pulpit or for the public—and only correct training in translation theory can produce legitimate translators. Wooden translations are good only for interlinears and schoolboy exercises; they are, however, not meant to be read. The user of VG would do well to supplement its guidelines for translation with these or similar observations.

On the technical side, the book is an attractive size, the type is a pleasing modern font (including the Greek script in which a circumflex appears like a hyphen over the letter), and the use of bold type and italics makes the

organization easy to follow. The bibliography is short, but adequate, and the fact that the Baur-Arndt-Gingrich (BAG) lexicon appears in it instead of Baur-Arndt-Gingrich-Danker (BAGD) can probably be accounted for by the fact that VG was undoubtedly in press when BAGD appeared.

There are a few of the usual typographical mistakes in a first printing, such as ξῶντος for ζῶντος on p. 24, φεοῦ for θεοῦ on p. 44, and a missing question mark after φάγωμεν on p. 103.

The book is impressive enough and fills the reviewer's need so well that it is presently the text for the first semester of intermediate Greek here in Grace College.

WESTON W. FIELDS

After the Sacrifice, by Walter A. Henrichsen. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979. Pp. 187. \$7.95.

Busy pastors will welcome this book. Its style (popular and devotional) and its illustrations make it a very effective tool for all pastors and teachers in the preparation of sermons and lessons from the Epistle to the Hebrews. It contains many helpful sermonic outlines, expositional helps, and seed thoughts.

The author, now associated with the Leadership Foundation, received his B.D. degree from Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, and served on the staff of the Navigators from 1960 to 1978. He writes, not as a theologian or biblical linguist, but as one who would share many practical insights from the epistle with his readers.

Throughout, Henrichsen applies the principles of inductive Bible study popularized by Robert A. Traina (*Methodical Bible Study*, The Biblical Seminary in New York, 1952) and Oletta Wald (*The Joy of Discovery*, Bible Banner Press, Minneapolis, 1956). The author employs 27 illustrative analytical charts, diagrams, and drawings to aid the reader and lead him to a better understanding of the grand Christology found in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The material is well-organized and easily followed. The charts alone are worth the price of the book.

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the book is the inadequate handling and misunderstanding of the five warning passages in the epistle. His discussions of these warnings are skimpy at best (some are not even discussed), and he fails to see the tremendous soteriological importance of them. He views the type of person being described in the warning passages as true believers rather than apostates (*unregenerate* persons who fall away to *perdition*, not simply backsliding, cf. Heb 10:39), and he gives no consideration to alternate views which better explain the biblical data. Here, some strength in theology and the biblical languages would have been immensely helpful.

Concerning the well-known warning of Heb 6:3-8, Henrichsen writes, "It refers to the child of God who has failed to believe God's promises and obey His commands" (p. 78). This statement fails to take into account the entire contextual teaching of the epistle and the epistle's own identification of *Esau* as the type of person being described (Heb 12:16).

The author makes no attempt to face the issue of the conditional statements (the "if" clauses) in the epistle nor does he deal with the great Biblical doctrine of the perseverance of true saints (the flip side of the Biblical doctrine of eternal security). He fails to see the theme that runs throughout the epistle, namely, that *continuance in the faith is the evidence of genuine faith*. Further, he fails to deal with the grammatical fact that adjectival (substantival) participles in NT Greek such as παραπεσόντας (governed by the definite article τούς in Heb 6:4) in Heb 6:6 can never be conditional, i.e., translated as an "if" clause. Thus the book has some glaring theological and (Greek) grammatical weaknesses.

Another disappointment to this reviewer is the author's tentative conclusion that Melchizedek was "an Old Testament revelation of Jesus Christ" (p. 90). Exactly what he means by this is left unclear. Theophanies, of course, are never given historical designations in the Bible such as Melchizedek is given in Genesis 14 and Hebrews 7. If Henrichsen means "type" by his statement then, of course, he is on target. Otherwise, he leaves his readers with a problem.

Heb 7:3 refers only to Melchizedek's apparent lack of a genealogy (for the sake of early Hebrew thought); that he actually had a genealogy is made clear in Heb 7:6. Henrichsen does not deal with this problem at all. An excellent treatment of the Melchizedekian issue and the warning passages in Hebrews can be found in F. F. Bruce's fine work *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (NICNT; Eerdmans, 1964).

Thus, the book is weakened by the fact that Henrichsen is neither a theologian nor a Greek grammarian, yet he has chosen to explain the Book of Hebrews, which requires much experience and excellency in both theology and Greek grammar.

On the other side of the ledger, in fairness to Henrichsen and the strengths of his work, the book is warmly devotional and Christ exalting. The finality of Christ's work of redemption and his superiority to all that was foreshadowed under the old Levitical cultus is repeatedly underscored. One cannot read this work without having his heart "strangely warmed" and having a far deeper appreciation for the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Despite its theological shortcomings, this reviewer feels that Henrichsen has written a very helpful work that will greatly benefit pastors and teachers who always find time at a premium and need help with sermonic outlines, illustrations, and seed thoughts for both preaching and teaching.

JOHN A. SPROULE

COLLECTED ESSAYS

Ugarit-Forschungen, 10, ed. by Kurt Bergerhof, Manfried Dietrich, and Oswald Loretz. (1978). Neukirchener: Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1979. Pp. 520. DM 154 (Subscription Price, DM 140).

This ten-year-old annual of Ugaritic studies (with an equal interest in biblical studies) is the Cadillac of published materials on Ugarit. There are probably two factors which have limited its usage in the West, the first of which is its price, a feature that has made it all but impossible for the average book buyer. The second is that the title, being written in German, has frightened many students away. In fact, sixteen of its twenty-nine major articles are in English. Its articles represent the highest academic quality. The annual is also characterized by a Kurzbeiträge section (brief contributions). There are about fifty pages of book reviews in areas of equal interest to both the biblical and Ugaritic scholar. One of the features that has made the work so usable has been an extensive index section, which covers all foreign words, literature passages, personal names, and general topics. All things considered, the volume should be in the library of every school in which biblical studies are taught. The following is a list of the main articles:

Aartun, K. "Textüberlieferung und vermeintliche Belege der Konjunktion pV im Alten Testament," pp. 1-14.

Alster, B. "Enki and Ninhursag, The Creation of the First Woman," pp. 15-28.

Avishur, Y. "The Second Amulet Incantation from Arslan-Tash," pp. 29-36.

Del Olmo Lete, G. "Notes on Ugaritic Semantics IV," pp. 37-46.

Del Olmo Lege, G. "The Ugaritic War Chariot. A New Translation of KTU 4.392 (PRU V, 105)," pp. 47-52.

Dietrich, M.—Loretz, O. "Das 'seefahrende Volk' von Šikila (RS 34.129)," pp. 53-56.

Dietrich, M.—Loretz, O. "Die sieben Kunstwerke des Schmiedegottes in KTU 1.4 I 23-43," pp. 57-64.

Dietrich, M.—Loretz, O. "Bemerkungen zum Aqhat-Text. Zur ugaritischen Lexikographie (XIV)," pp. 65-72.

Emerton, J. A. "A Further Note on CTA 51 4-6," pp. 73-78.

Gorg, M. "Zur Westpolitik der babylonischen Kassiten," pp. 79-82.

Healey, J. F. "Ritual Text KTU 1.161—Translation and Notes," pp. 83-88.

Healey, J. F. "MLKM/RPUM and the KISPUM," pp. 89-92.

Heyer, R. "Ein archäologischer Beitrag zum Text KTU 1.4 I 23-43," pp. 93-110.

Loewenstamm, S. E. "Balloti b^cšämän ra^cañān," pp. 111-14.

Loretz, O. "Altorientalischer Hintergrund sowie inner- und nachbiblische Entwicklung des aaronitischen Segens (Num 6,24-26)," pp. 115-20.

Loretz, O. "Die ASIRUM-Texte (I)," pp. 121-60.

Macdonald, J. "The Unique Ugaritic Personnel Text KTU 4.102," pp. 161-74.

Mayer, W. "Gedanken zum Einsatz von Streitwagen und Reitern in neuassyrischer Zeit," pp. 175-86.

Moor, J. C. de. "The Art of Versification in Ugaritic and Israel. II: The Formal Structure," pp. 187-218.

Neufeld, E. "Apiculture in Ancient Palestine (Early and Middle Iron Age) within the Framework of the Ancient Near East," pp. 219-48.

Pardee, D. "The Semitic Root mrr and the Etymology of Ugaritic mr(r)// brk," pp. 249-88.

Pardee, D. "Letters from Tel Arad," pp. 289-336.

Priebatsch, H. Y. "Der Weg des semitischen Perfekts," pp. 337-48.

Sanmartin, J. "Glossen zum ugaritischen Lexikon (II)," pp. 349-56.

Sauer, G. "Die Ugaristik und die Psalmenforschung, II," pp. 357-86.

Tsumura, D. T. "A Problem of Myth and Ritual Relationship—CTA 23 (UT 52): 56-57 Reconsidered," pp. 387-96.

Watson, W. G. E. "Parallels to some Passages in Ugaritic," pp. 397-402.

Wegner, I. "Regenzauber im Hattiland," pp. 403-10.

Weinfeld, M. "Burning Babies in Ancient Israel. A Rejoinder to Morton Smith's Article in *JAOS* 95 (1975), pp. 477-79," pp. 411-16.

The Bible in its Literary Milieu: Contemporary Essays, ed. by Vincent L. Tollers and John R. Maier. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979. Pp. 447. \$10.95. Paper.

Schokel, Luis Alonso. "The Psychology of Inspiration," pp. 24-56.

Frye, Northrop. "Theory of Archetypal Meaning: Apocalyptic and Demonic Imagery," pp. 67-66.

Lindblom, Johannes. "Symbolic Perceptions and Literary Visions," pp. 67-76.

Freedman, David Noel. "Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy: An Essay on Biblical Poetry," pp. 77-102.

Kaiser Jr., Walter C. "The Old Promise and the New Covenant: Jeremiah 31:31-34," pp. 106-20.

Collins, John J. "History and Tradition in the Prophet Amos," pp. 121-33.

Frost, Stanley Brice. "Apocalyptic and History," pp. 134-47.

Albright, William F. "The Antiquity of Mosaic Law," pp. 148-55.

Walker, Jr., William O. "The Origin of the Son of Man Concept as Applied to Jesus," pp. 156-65.

Wright, G. Ernest. "What Archaeology Can and Cannot Do," pp. 166-72.

Mowinckel, Sigmund. "The Method of Cultic Interpretation," pp. 173-90.

Klein, Ralph W. "Aspects of Intertestamental Messianism," pp. 191-206.

Roberts, Bleddyn J. "The Old Testament: Manuscripts, Text and Versions," pp. 212-34.

Metzger, Bruce M. "The Practice of New Testament Textual Criticism," pp. 235-52.

Frye, Roland Mushat. "The Bible in English," pp. 253-66.

Kramer, Samuel Noah. "Sumerian Literature and the Bible," pp. 272-84.

Lambert, W. G. "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," pp. 285-97.

Cox, Roger L. "Tragedy and the Gospel Narratives," pp. 298-317.

Whallon, William. "Biblical Poetry and Homeric Epic," pp. 318-28.

Tilborg, S. Van. "A Form-Criticism of the Lord's Prayer," pp. 334-43.
Perrin, Norman. "Redaction Criticism at Work: A Sample," pp. 344-61.
Muilenburg, James. "Form Criticism and Beyond," pp. 362-80.
Burke, Kenneth. "The First Three Chapters of Genesis," pp. 381-95.
Macquarrie, John. "Symbolism Case Study: Light as a Religious Symbol," pp. 396-410.
Leach, Edmund. "Genesis as Myth," pp. 411-22.

Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture, ed. by Robert T. Coote and John Stott. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. Pp. 342. \$7.95. Paper.

Neill, Stephen C. "Religion and Culture—A Historical Introduction," pp. 1-16.
Marshall, I. Howard. "Culture and the New Testament," pp. 17-32.
Kumar, S. Ananda. "Culture and the Old Testament," pp. 33-48.
Nicholls, Bruce J. "Towards a Theology of Gospel and Culture," pp. 49-62.
Padilla, C. Rene. "Hermeneutics and Culture—A Theological Perspective," pp. 63-78.
Taber, Charles R. "Hermeneutics and Culture—An Anthropological Perspective," pp. 79-96.
Packer, James I. "The Gospel: Its Content and Communication—A Theological Perspective," pp. 97-114.
Loewen, Jacob A. "The Gospel: Its Content and Communication—An Anthropological Perspective," pp. 115-30.
Jacobs, Donald R. "Conversion and Culture—An Anthropological Perspective with Reference to East Africa," pp. 131-46.
Conn, Harvie, M. "Conversion and Culture—A Theological Perspective with Reference to Korea," pp. 147-72.
Costas, Orlando E. "Conversion as a Complex Experience—A Personal Case Study," pp. 173-92.
Cragg, Kenneth. "Conversion and Convertibility—With Special Reference to Muslims," pp. 193-210.
Kraft, Charles H. "The Church in Culture—A Dynamic Equivalence Model," pp. 211-30.
Krass, Alfred C. "Mission as Inter-Cultural Encounter—A Sociological Perspective," pp. 231-58.
Mastra, I. Wayan. "Contextualization of the Church in Bali—A Case Study from Indonesia," pp. 259-72.
Osei-Mensah, Gottfried. "The Christian Life-Style," pp. 273-86.
Tippett, Alan R. "Contextualization of the Gospel in Fiji—A Case Study from Oceania," pp. 287-307.

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the first issue of this journal, notation was made concerning the recent explosion of publishers who are reprinting older works. In that issue, OT subjects dominated, while here equal time is given to NT subject areas. The volumes will be dealt with in groupings from the publishers, who are presented in alphabetical order. First from Alpha publishers:

Rays of Messiah's Glory: Christ in the Old Testament by David Baron. Winona Lake, IN: Alpha, 1979 [1886]. Pp. 274. \$7.95.

Baron was a converted Russian Jew who experienced fifty years of successful Christian ministry. Perhaps the truest description of his work is that it was characterized by a zealous warmth not normally found in such books. To be sure, his treatment of Christ's Messiahship must be reevaluated at various points; on the whole, however, his work is an inspirational and biblical study of Christ in the OT.

Bible studies: Contributions chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions, by Adolf Deissman, Winona Lake, IN: Alpha, 1979 [1901]. Pp. 384. \$12.00.

Originally, this volume was intended to help explain in a totally new manner, the relationship of NT Greek to that of extra-biblical Greek; in short, it sought to provide a better understanding of *koinē* Greek. For the book collector, this first reprint in fifty years should be well received.

The Revelation of Law in Scripture by Patrick Fairbairn. Winona Lake, IN: Alpha, 1979 [1869]. Pp. 484. \$13.95.

Few subjects have been found more difficult to understand than that of the relationship of the believer to the law. Fairbairn has provided one of the more popular attempts to make that explanation. Originally intended as a series of lectures, it grew into a book that has had a long history of popularity among students and pastors.

Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul: I and II Thessalonians, I Corinthians 1-7, Romans 1-7, and Ephesians 1:1-14 by J. B. Lightfoot. Winona Lake, IN: Alpha, 1979 [1895]. Pp. 336. \$9.95.

No one who is a student of the Bible needs an introduction to the eminent Bishop Lightfoot. These commentaries represent unfinished work that was nonetheless published. Like the rest of his work, they are treasured by pastors and scholars.

Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament, by Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer. Winona Lake, IN: Alpha, 1979 [1883]. 11 volumes. \$225.00.

This nineteenth-century Greek scholar was one of the finest commentators of his time. Indeed, so skillful were his comments that they remain highly prized by many pastors and teachers. It has been out of print since

1906—a feature which has made original copies expensive. I just noted in a used book catalogue that a set missing the Gospel of Mark was offered for \$150.00! For these reasons, we are glad to see this fine, old set back in print.

From Baker we have the following:

The Philosophy of Revelation, by Herman Bavinck. Twin Brooks Series. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 [1909]. Pp. 349. \$7.95. Paper.

There is a timelessness that is characteristic of good theology. It is that very timelessness which makes this a useful tool. This Reformed scholar traced the idea of revelation and integrated that study with chapters in which revelation is studied in light of philosophy (2-3), nature (4), history (5), religion (6), Christianity (7), religious experience (8), culture (9), and the future (10).

The John Eadie Greek Text Commentaries, by John Eadie. *Galatians through Thessalonians*. 5 Vols. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 [1877]. Pp. 1940. \$43.75. Paper.

This truly outstanding set recently went out of print. We are grateful to the publishers for reprinting the solid work of this brilliant nineteenth-century Presbyterian scholar. The exegesis is useful for sermon-building or simply feasting on its riches. It should be in every pastor's library (at least for those who have had Greek).

History of Interpretation, by Frederic W. Farrar. Twin Brooks Series. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 [1886]. Pp. 553. \$9.95. Paper.

An original contribution to the Bampton Lectures for 1885, it was a model for its diligence and clarity of expression. While our knowledge of interpretation in, say, the Rabbinic period (especially because of Qumran), has forced a modification of some of the statements, it is still useful, especially if used with a more up-to-date work.

A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica: Matthew-I Corinthians, by John Lightfoot and edited by Robert Gandell. 4 Vols, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 1639. \$45.00. Paper.

As Laird Harris stated in the book's introduction, there are two areas of abuse concerning the use of the Talmud as a device for adding light to the NT. The first is underuse and the second is overuse. A utilization of these volumes will help in correcting both. Without any counterpart in English (the only other thing comparable is Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, 6 Vols. [Munich: Beck, 1922-1961]), it is a treasure trove of information that can liven up any sermon with some enlightened contributions. The publishers are to be commended for putting this set back on the market.

Theories of Revelation: An Historical Study 1700-1960, by H. D. McDonald. Twin Brook Series. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 [1963]. Pp. 384. \$10.95. Paper.

This volume was originally written as two separate volumes; the first covering the years 1700-1860 and the second from 1860-1960. This scholarly work is sympathetic to the orthodox view of inspiration of Scripture. It is one of the best volumes ever done on revelation and should be well-received by the book-buying public because of the present debate over this watershed issue.

The Epistles of Jude and II Peter, by Joseph B. Mayor. Twin Brook Series. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 [1907]. Pp. 239. \$8.95. Paper.

Anything by this turn-of-the-century divine is worth having. This volume is a classic which is marred only by his rejection of Petrine authorship. It is highly recommended for any pastor's library.

Studies in the Gospels, by R. C. Trench. Twin Brook Series. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 [1874]. Pp. 335. \$5.95. Paper.

The author selected sixteen passages form the Gospels on which to comment. Their primary value is for sermon-building.

Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, by B. F. Westcott. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 [1906]. Pp. 212. \$5.95. Paper.

Long available in cloth, this very popular commentary is here available in paperback. At \$5.95, anyone can afford to purchase this excellent commentary.

The Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament, by George V. Wigram. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 1122. \$18.95. Paper.

For many years, *The Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament* was a necessary tool for those who were not really comfortable with their Greek. This volume is a step ahead of the original. With any one who desired to do so, he could make a study of a Greek word without any knowledge of Greek because this volume is keyed to Strong's Concordance (and also Thayer's Greek Lexicon). Of course, it is expected that shortly the student will learn his Greek.

From Broadman, there is:

The Works of Flavius Josephus, translated by William Whiston. 4 vols. Nashville: Broadman, 1978. \$29.95.

There are few sources for NT backgrounds that are more important than Josephus. Certainly, the best known translator was Whiston whose work has charmed many readers over the years. This handsomely bound set has an advantage over others in that it appears in four volumes. Of course, for serious students, the *Loeb Classical Library* edition is to be preferred. This edition, however, will be treasured by all who purchase it.

By far, the largest number of books received have been from Klock & Klock. Their volumes are always carefully chosen, handsomely bound, and reasonably priced.

Commentary on the Gospel of Mark, by J. A. Alexander. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1980 [1864]. Pp. 444. \$13.95.

This former Princeton Seminary professor was a competent scholar in his era and an efficient writer who produced commentaries on the Psalms, Acts, as well as the first sixteen chapters of Matthew. His work on Mark is useful (especially in light of its reasonable price) but should not be treated as a primary commentary.

The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament, by Thomas Dehany Bernard. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1896]. Pp. 258. \$7.50.

The contents are taken from a group of lectures the author gave while a preacher at Oxford in 1864. It has and will continue to be a valued addition on this neglected area of biblical studies.

An Exposition of our Lord's Intercessory Prayer, by John Brown. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1866]. Pp. 303. \$8.95.

This is a warm and insightful commentary on the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel. It will be helpful for the pastor who is doing an exposition of that chapter and is recommended reading on that Gospel.

The Resurrection of Life: An Exposition of First Corinthians XV, by John Brown. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1866]. Pp. 310. \$10.95.

The single most important passage in Scripture on the resurrection of Christ has received a scholarly and admirable commentary by John Brown. It is highly recommended for the minister's library.

Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, by Franz Delitzsch. 2 Vols. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1871]. Pp. 401, 492. \$24.95.

It is truly wonderful to see this masterful exposition of Hebrews by that renowned Semitist Delitzsch on print. The exegesis is first rate and directed at understanding a text rather unlike so many modern works on Hebrews. As a convert to Christianity from Judaism, the author was able to draw from the rich well of Jewish literature. I know of no finer treatment of Hebrews than this.

A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, by Thomas Charles Edwards. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1979 [1885]. Pp. 491. \$14.75.

This was a major exegetical commentary which was fully conversant with the literature of the past and the present. It can be of good use to both the pastor and the teacher and it is a pleasure to see it here reprinted.

The Background of the Gospels, by William Fairweather. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1977 [1920]. Pp. 456. \$12.50. *The Background of the Epistles* by William Fairweather. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1977 [1935]. Pp. 399. \$11.50.

So much has changed in the last fifty years of the world of scholarship that it redounds to a book's credit that it can still be found useful. Such can be said for these two volumes whose titles intimate the contents. The purpose for the work on the Gospels was to chronicle through a study on the intertestamental period how the world was being prepared for the coming of Christ. The same method is followed in the work on the Epistles. He studies the background from a historical, literary, religious, and doctrinal perspective. He concludes that the divine Spirit was responsible for the greater understanding of the working of God in the Epistles.

A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, by Paton J. Gloag. 2 Vols. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1979 [1870]. Pp. 439, 456. \$24.95.

Gloag was a Scottish Presbyterian who pastored for most of his life. At the tender age of 73, he became a professor at the University of Aberdeen. Quite unlike most ministers today, he wrote prolifically and studied in such a way that the transition from pulpit to classroom was easily made. He has left us here with a fine, exegetical treatment of Acts which can be used with profit.

The Divinity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by H. P. Liddon. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1867]. Pp. 585. \$16.95.

Liddon was a prolific scholar and pastor who had left us here his *magnum opus*—a stout defense of the divinity of Christ. Originally, this book was delivered as the Bampton Lectures at Oxford in 1866. No serious student can study that doctrine without making reference to this volume.

Lectures on the First and Second Epistles of Peter, by John Lillie. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1869]. Pp. 536. \$16.50.

While most of these reprints have been of works by authors from the British Isles, Lillie was an American scholar who did the translation work on the Thessalonian Epistles in *Lange's Commentary*. His work here is one of the solid exegesis characterized by a faithfulness to the text.

An Exposition of the Epistle of Jude, by Thomas Manton. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1658]. Pp. 376. \$9.50.

This Calvinistic Puritan scholar was one of the most eloquent of the seventeenth-century writers. His work would today probably fit into a theological rather than exegetical category.

Epistles of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter, by Joseph B. Mayor. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1907]. Pp. 239. \$12.50.

Also in paperback (see earlier under Baker's reprints) this is quite a bargain at \$12.50 and comes highly recommended.

The History of the Puritans, by Daniel Neal. 3 Vols. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1979 [1837]. Pp. 637, 704, 636. \$49.95.

Massive in scope, this work has been (and because of this new printing) will continue to be one of the best histories available. As a history, it chronicles a history of nonconformity from the Reformation to the Act of Toleration (1689). That in this country there is an aversion to historical studies of any kind may be readily seen by counting the number of history majors in any university. This sad disinterest is to our own peril as a country. Nowhere is this more important than in the struggle for religious freedom with which these volumes are concerned. It should be mandatory reading for every American.

The Antichrist, by Arthur W. Pink. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1979. [1923]. Pp. 308. \$9.50.

The present work is characteristic of the popular writer A. W. Pink in that it is eminently readable. The book is a collection of his articles in his own magazine, *Studies in the Scriptures*. It is a solid study written on a popular level.

A Historical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, by Wm. M. Ramsay. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1900]. Pp. 478. \$14.25.

Originally written to solve the Galatian controversy by arguing for a Southern View, the volume also casts light on the Apostle Paul and the book of Acts. This was the work which won over most Biblicalists to the Southern View. It is not, nor was it intended to be a commentary. On the other hand, it informs the reader in a way that conventional commentaries cannot.

Christ in His Suffering, by K. Schilder. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1938]. Pp. 467. *Christ on Trial*, 1978 [1939]. Pp. 539. *Christ Crucified*, 1978 [1940]. Pp. 561. The set, \$39.95.

This fine work, a so-called "Lenten trilogy," creatively studied the events of that last week of our Lord's life on earth. It rightly belongs in the genre of "devotional" literature; yet, it rises above nearly all such volumes. This is devotional material at its best; it majestically calls forth the believer to a higher standing. It should be recommended reading for both pastors and informed laymen.

A Critical and Doctrinal Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, by William G. T. Shedd. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1879]. Pp. 439.

The great pastor and scholar Shedd is better known for his *Dogmatic Theology*, although the former Union Seminary professor has also left us here with a worthy exegetical commentary on Romans. This volume is characteristic of that high level of accomplishment which characterized nineteenth-century scholarship.

Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia, by R. C. Trench. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1879]. Pp. 250. \$6.95.

This is a lesser known work of the famous scholar which, nonetheless, is a solid exegesis of the first three chapters of Revelation. He held to the view that the churches represent different ages.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, by B. F. Westcott. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1906]. Pp. 212. \$7.95.

The incredibly popular Westcott continues to appeal to pastors and scholars to this day. This volume is identical in style and content to those of his other works. At \$7.95, it is a bargain.

Introduction to the New Testament, by Theodor Zahn. 3 Vols. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1977 [1909]. Pp. 564, 617, 539. \$39.95.

The reprinting of this massive set (last done in 1953) is a welcome aid to students and pastors alike. It is characterized by a conservative treatment of the text, a feature which has contributed to its timeless appeal. While one should never fail to consult the newer introductions, neither should one ignore the contributions of this author.

From Kregel publishers, we have the following volumes:

Studies in Acts, by William Arnot. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1978 [1883]. Pp. 464. \$10.95.

This is a devotional commentary by a nineteenth-century pastor who ministered in Glasgow and Edinburgh in the Free Church Movement. It could be a useful aid to those with no Greek.

The Training of the Twelve, by A. B. Bruce. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1971 [1871]. Pp. 552. \$6.95. Paper.

This volume is still today regarded by many as the classic work on discipleship. Unlike so many "how to" books from today's market, this one has depth and should comfort the mind of many a pastor.

Great Cloud of Witnesses in Hebrews Eleven, by E. W. Bullinger. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1979 [1911]. Pp. 462. \$7.95.

Probably it is the warmth and fervor of Bullinger's style that has kept him popular far beyond his time. Here, he draws upon his personal scholarship to interpret Hebrews 11. The result is a readable and devotional tour through the catalogue of saints.

The Giver and His Gifts, or The Holy Spirit and His Work, by E. W. Bullinger. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1979 [1905]. Pp. 223. \$5.95. Paper.

The layout of this volume is simple; all but 40 pages of the book are given over to a verse commentary wherever *pneuma* appears. While I would prefer *TDNT*, some will, no doubt, find this volume attractive because of his dispensationalism. An attractive feature of the book is a well-developed index.

The First Epistle of John, by Robert S. Candlish. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1979 [1877]. Pp. 577. \$12.95.

This exposition of 1 John comes from the mid-nineteenth-century pen of Robert Candlish, who was a leader of the Free Church in Scotland and, later, principal of New College in Edinburgh. The commentary is devotional in character and often hortatory in content.

Commentary on John's Gospel, by F. L. Godet. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1978 [1886]. Pp. 1112. \$19.95.

It is with gladness that we welcome again into print the massive commentary on John by Godet, one of the most prominent of the Swiss Protestant Reform scholars. The work is exegetical in its exposition as well as heartwarming. While it must stand behind some of the newer works (such as Morris), it should be allowed to stand.

Commentary on Hebrews, by William Gouge. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1980 [1866]. Pp. 1148. \$22.95.

This massive work on Hebrews from the pen of the sixteenth-century pastor and scholar will probably be welcomed by the bibliophile alone. Competitors for first place on Hebrews are many and mighty. Against that type of competition, the old work cannot stand; however, it is good to see it in print again.

The Theocratic Kingdom, by George N. H. Peters. 3 Vols. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1978 [1884]. Pp. 694, 780, 701. \$49.95.

Without question, this well-known (but underread!) volume is the finest product of nineteenth-century premillennial scholarship. While often tedious reading, it cannot be ignored by proponents or opponents. It set a standard of excellence which twentieth-century premillennial scholarship should strive to achieve.

The Gospel of Matthew, by David Thomas. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1979 [1873]. Pp. 560. \$12.95.

David Thomas was a Congregationalist from South Wales who entered the Independent ministry in 1841. For 29 years he was minister at the Stockwell Independent Church in London. The approach is topical and more concerned with application than interpretation; hence, many interpretive problems are overlooked.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ADAMS, J. MCKEE. *Biblical Backgrounds*. Nashville: Broadman, 1965. Pp. 231. \$9.75.

BARTH, KARL. *Evangelical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963. Pp. 206. \$5.95. Paper.

BAVINCK, HERMAN. *The Philosophy of Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 349. \$7.95. Paper.

BELCHER, RICHARD P. *A Layman's Guide to the Inerrancy Debate*. Chicago: Moody, 1980. Pp. 80. N.P. Paper.

BENSON, WARREN. *The Key to Sunday School Achievement*. Chicago: Moody, 1980. Pp. 110. \$4.95. Paper.

BROMILEY, GEOFFREY W. *Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979. Pp. 253. \$7.95. Paper.

BRUCE, F. F. *Peter, Stephen, James, and John: Studies in Early Non-Pauline Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979. Pp. 159. \$7.95.

BUSHNELL, HORACE. *Christian Nurture*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 407. \$7.95. Paper.

CRISWELL, W. A. *Did Man Just Happen?* Chicago: Moody, 1980. Pp. 127. \$2.25. Paper.

DAANE, JAMES. *Preaching with Confidence: a Theological Essay on the Power of the Pulpit*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. Pp. 80. \$3.95. Paper.

DANA, H. E. *The New Testament World*. Nashville: Broadman, 1937. Pp. 267. \$7.95.

DELAMONT, VIC. *The Ministry of Music in the Church*. Chicago: Moody, 1980. Pp. 160. \$5.95. Paper.

ECK, JOHN. *Enchiridion of Commonplaces*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 312. \$9.95. Paper.

FARRAR, FREDERICK W. *History of Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 553. \$9.95. Paper.

FEINBERG, CHARLES L. *God Remembers*. Portland, OR: Multnomah 1979. Pp. 229. \$12.95.

FINNEY, CHARLES G. *The Promise of The Spirit*. Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1980. Pp. 265. N.P. Paper.

GROMACKI, ROBERT G. *Stand Fast in Liberty: An Exposition of Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 199. \$5.95. Paper.

HOUSTON, JAMES M. *I Believe in the Creator*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. Pp. 287. \$4.95. Paper.

JOCZ, JAKOB. *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ: The Relationship Between Church and Synagogue*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 448. \$7.95. Paper.

JULIEN, TOM. *Studies in Exodus*. Winona Lake, IN.: BMH, 1979. Pp. 154. \$3.95. Paper.

DU MAS, FRANK M. *Gay is Not Good*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1979. Pp. 331. \$11.95.

MOODY, DWIGHT L. *Notes From the Bible and Thoughts From My Library*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 396. \$12.95.

NIDA, EUGENE A. et al. *What Bible Can You Trust?* Nashville: Broadman, 1974. Pp. 116. \$2.95. Paper.

PACHE, RENE. *The Future Life*. Chicago: Moody, 1962. Pp. 376. \$6.95. Paper.

PETRY, RONALD D. *Partners in Creation*. Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1980. Pp. 126. \$4.95. Paper.

PFEIFFER, CHARLES F. *The Biblical World: A Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology*. Nashville: Broadman, 1976. Pp. 640. \$14.95.

MACARTHUR, JOHN. *Kingdom Living Here and Now*. Chicago: Moody, 1980. Pp. 186. \$8.95.

MCALLISTER, DAWSON, and WEBSTER, DAN. *Discussion Manual for Student Relationships*. Chicago: Moody, 1979. Pp. 181. \$7.95. Paper.

MCALLISTER, DAWSON, and WEBSTER, DAN. *Discussion Manual for Student Discipleship*. Vols. 1-2. Chicago: Moody, 1979. Pp. 190 and 162. \$6.95 each. Paper.

MCALLISTER, DAWSON. *Discussion Manual of Student Relationships, Teachers Guide*. Chicago: Moody, 1979. Pp. 118. \$5.95. Paper.

MARTIN, RALPH P. *The Family and the Fellowship*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979. Pp. 142. \$4.95. Paper.

PRATT, RICHARD L. *Every Thought Captive*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1979. Pp. 142. \$3.95. Paper.

QUAYLE, WILLIAM A. *The Pastor-Preacher*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 327. \$6.95. Paper.

QUISPTEL, GILLES. *The Secret Book of Revelation*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979. Pp. 192. \$39.95.

RAD, GERHARD VON. *God at Work in Israel*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980. Pp. 223. \$6.95. Paper.

ROBERTSON, IRVINE. *What The Cults Believe*. Chicago: Moody, 1979. Pp. 154. \$6.95.

ROHRBAUGH, RICHARD L. *Into All The World*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1976. Pp. 172. \$5.95. Paper.

SCROGGIE, W. GRAHAM. *Tested by Temptation*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1958. Pp. 76. \$2.50. Paper.

SCROGGIE, W. GRAHAM. *The Love Life: I Corinthians 13*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1935. Pp. 95. \$2.50. Paper.

SMITH, WILBUR M. *Biblical Doctrine of Heaven*. Chicago: Moody, 1980. Pp. 317. \$5.95. Paper.

SOLMSEN, FRIEDRICH. *Isis Among The Greeks & Romans*. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1979. Pp. 157. \$12.50.

SUMMERS, RAY. *Essentials of New Testament Greek*. Nashville: Broadman, 1950. Pp. 171. \$7.95.

TANNER, JERALD and SANDRA. *The Changing World of Mormonism*. Chicago: Moody, 1980. Pp. 592. \$11.95. Paper.

WIEAND, DAVID J. *Visions of Glory*. Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1979. Pp. 132. \$4.95. Paper.

WIGRAM, GEORGE V. *The Englishman's Greek Concordance*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979. Pp. 1122. \$18.95. Paper.





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